



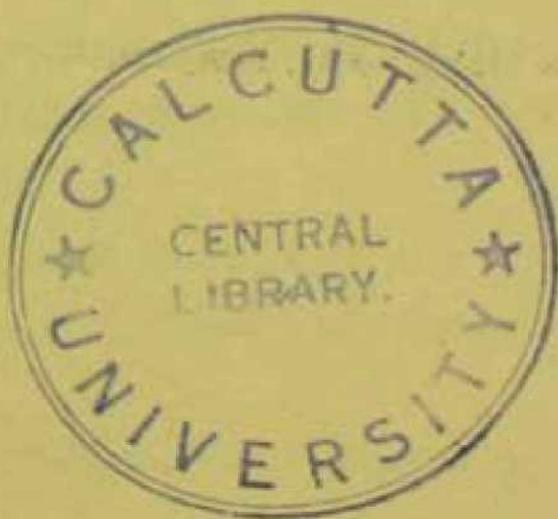
**INTERMEDIATE
PROSE SELECTIONS**



INTERMEDIATE PROSE SELECTIONS



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INTERMEDIATE PROSE SELECTIONS

AS YOU LIKE IT

ACT I.

SCENE I. OLIVER'S ORCHARD.

Enter Orlando and Adam.

Orl. As I remember, Adam, it was upon this fashion,—he bequeathed me by will but poor a thousand crowns; and, as thou say'st, charged my brother, on his blessing, to breed me well: and there begins my sadness. My brother Jaques he keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of his profit: for my part, he keeps me rustically at home, or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home unkept; for call you that keeping for a gentleman of my birth, that differs not from the stalling of an ox? His horses are bred better; for, besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage, and to that end riders dearly hired: but I, his brother, gain nothing under him but growth; for the



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which his animals on his dunghills are as much bound to him as I. Besides this nothing that he so plentifully gives me, the something that Nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me: he lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and, as much as in him lies, mines my gentility with my education. This is it, Adam, that grieves me; and the spirit of my father, which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude: I will no longer endure it, though yet I know no wise remedy how to avoid it.

Adam. Yonder comes my master, your brother.

Orl. Go apart, Adam, and thou shalt hear how he will shake me up.

[*Adam retires.*

Enter Oliver.

Oli. Now, Sir ! what make you here ?

Orl. Nothing: I am not taught to make anything.

Oli. What mar you then, Sir ?

Orl. Marry, Sir, I am helping you to mar that which God made, a poor unworthy brother of yours, with idleness.

Oli. Marry, Sir, be better employed, and be naught a while !

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Orl. Shall I keep your hogs, and eat husks with them ? What prodigal's portion have I spent, that I should come to such penury ?

Oli. Know you where you are, Sir ?

Orl. O, Sir, very well : here in your orchard.

Oli. Know you before whom, Sir ?

Orl. Ay, better than he I am before knows me. I know you are my eldest brother ; and, in the gentle condition of blood, you should so know me. The courtesy of nations allows you my better, in that you are the first-born ; but the same tradition takes not away my blood, were there twenty brothers betwixt us : I have as much of my father in me as you ; albeit, I confess, your coming before me is nearer to his reverence.

Oli. What, boy !

Orl. Come, come, elder brother, you are too young in this.

Oli. Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain ?

Orl. I am no villain : I am the youngest son of Sir Roland de Bois ; he was my father ; and he is thrice a villain that says such a father begot villains. Wert thou not my brother, I would not take this hand from thy throat till this other had pull'd out thy tongue for saying so : thou hast rail'd on thyself.

Adam. [coming forward.] Sweet masters, be



patient: for your father's remembrance, be at accord.

Oli. Let me go, I say.

Orl. I will not, till I please: you shall hear me. My father charged you in his will to give me good education: you have train'd me like a peasant, obscuring and hiding from me all gentleman-like qualities. The spirit of my father grows strong in me, and I will no longer endure it: therefore allow me such exercises as may become a gentleman, or give me the poor allottery my father left me by testament; with that I will go buy my fortunes.

Oli. And what wilt thou do? beg, when that is spent? Well, Sir, get you in: I will not long be troubled with you; you shall have some part of your will: I pray you, leave me.

Orl. I will no further offend you than becomes me for my good.

Oli. Get you with him, you old dog!

Adam. Is old dog my reward? Most true, I have lost my teeth in your service. God be with my old master! he would not have spoke such a word.

[*Exeunt Orlando and Adam.*]

Oli. Is it even so? begin you to grow upon me? I will physic your rankness, and yet give no thousand crowns neither. Holla, Denis!

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*Enter Denis.**Den.* Calls your Worship ?*Oli.* Was not Charles the Duke's wrestler here to speak with me ?*Den.* So please you, he is here at the door, and importunes access to you.*Oli.* Call him in. [Exit *Denis.*] 'Twill be a good way ; and to-morrow the wrestling is.*Enter Charles.**Cha.* Good Morrow to your Worship.*Oli.* Good Morrow, Monsieur Charles. What's the new news at the new Court ?*Cha.* There's no news at the Court, Sir, but the old news : that is, the old Duke is banished by his younger brother the new Duke ; and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new Duke ; therefore he gives them good leave to wander.*Oli.* Can you tell if Rosalind, the old Duke's daughter, be banished with her father ?*Cha.* O, no ; for the new Duke's daughter, her cousin, so loves her,—being ever from their cradles bred together,—that she would have followed her exile, or have died to stay behind her. She is



at the Court, and no less beloved of her uncle than his own daughter ; and never two ladies loved as they do.

Oli. Where will the old Duke live ?

Cha. They say, he is already in the Forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him ; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England : they say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world.

Oli. What, you wrestle to-morrow before the new Duke ?

Cha. Marry, do I, Sir ; and I came to acquaint you with a matter. I am given, Sir, secretly to understand that your younger brother Orlando hath a disposition to come in disguised against me to try a fall. To-morrow, Sir, I wrestle for my credit ; and he that escapes me without some broken limb shall acquit him well. Your brother is but young and tender, and, for your love, I would be loth to foil him, as I must, for my own honour, if he come in : therefore, out of my love to you, I came hither to acquaint you withal ; that either you might stay him from his intend-
ment, or brook such disgrace well as he shall run into, in that it is a thing of his own search, and altogether against my will.

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Oli. Charles, I thank thee for thy love to me, which thou shalt find I will most kindly requite. I had myself notice of my brother's purpose herein, and have by underhand means laboured to dissuade him from it; but he is resolute. I tell thee, Charles, it is the stubbornest young fellow of France; full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man's good parts, a secret and villainous contriver against me his natural brother: therefore use thy discretion; I had as lief thou didst break his neck as his finger. And thou wert best look to 't; for if thou dost him any slight disgrace, or if he do not mightily grace himself on thee, he will practice against thee by poison, entrap thee by some treacherous device, and never leave thee till he hath ta'en thy life by some indirect means or other; for, I assure thee, and almost with tears I speak it, there is not one so young and so villainous this day living. I speak but brotherly of him; but, should I anatomize him to thee as he is, I must blush and weep, and thou must look pale and wonder.

Cha. I am heartily glad I came hither to you. If he come to-morrow, I'll give him his payment: if ever he go alone again, I'll never wrestle for prize more: and so God keep your Worship!

Oli. Farewell, good Charles. [Exit Charles.]



Now will I stir this gamester: I hope I shall see an end of him ; for my soul, yet I know not why, hates nothing more than he. Yet he's gentle ; never school'd, and yet learned ; full of noble device ; of all sorts enchantingly beloved ; and indeed so much in the heart of the world, and especially of my own people, who best know him, that I am altogether misprised. But it shall not be so long ; this wrestler shall clear all: nothing remains but that I kindle the boy thither ; which now I'll go about.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. A LAWN before the DUKE'S PALACE.

Enter Rosalind and Celia.

Cel. I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.

Ros. Dear Celia, I show more mirth than I am mistress of ; and would you yet I were merrier ? Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure.

Cel. Herein I see thou lovest me not with the full weight that I love thee. If my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the Duke my ather, so thou hadst been still with me, I

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could have taught my love to take thy father for mine: so wouldest thou, if the truth of thy love to me were so righteously temper'd as mine is to thee.

Ros. Well, I will forget the condition of my estate, to rejoice in yours.

Cel. You know my father hath no child but I, nor none is like to have: and, truly, when he dies, thou shalt be his heir; for what he hath taken away from thy father perforce, I will render thee again in affection; by mine honour, I will; and when I break that oath, let me turn monster: therefore, my sweet Rose, my dear Rose, be merry.

Ros. From henceforth I will, coz, and devise sports. Let me see; what think you of falling in love?

Cel. Marry, I prithee, do, to make sport withal: but love no man in good earnest; nor no further in sport neither than with safety of a pure blush thou mayst in honour come off again.

Ros. What shall be our sport, then?

Cel. Let us sit and mock the good housewife Fortune from her wheel, that her gifts may henceforth be bestowed equally.

Ros. I would we could do so; for her benefits are mightily misplaced; and the bountiful



'blind woman doth most mistake in her gifts to women.

Cel. 'Tis true ; for those that she makes fair, she scarce makes honest ; and those that she makes honest, she makes very ill-favouredly.

Ros. Nay, now thou goest from Fortune's office to Nature's : Fortune reigns in gifts of the world, not in the lineaments of Nature.

Enter Touchstone.

Cel. No ? when Nature hath made a fair creature, may she not by Fortune fall into the fire ? Though Nature hath given us wit to flout at Fortune, hath not Fortune sent in this Fool to cut off the argument ?

Ros. Indeed, there is Fortune too hard for Nature, when Fortune makes Nature's natural the cutter-off of Nature's wit.

Cel. Peradventure this is not Fortune's work neither, but Nature's ; who, perceiving our natural wits too dull to reason of such goddesses, hath sent this natural for our whetstone ; for always the dulness of the fool is the whetstone of the wits. How now, wit ! whither wander you ?

Touch. Mistress, you must come away to your father.

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Cel. Were you made the messenger ?

Touch. No, by mine honour ; but I was bid to come for you.

Ros. Where learned you that oath, Fool ?

Touch. Of a certain knight that swore by his honour they were good pancakes, and swore by his honour the mustard was naught : now I'll stand to it, the pancakes were naught, and the mustard was good ; and yet was not the knight forswn.

Cel. How prove you that, in the great heap of your knowledge ?

Ros. Ay, marry, now unmuzzle your wisdom.

Touch. Stand you both forth now : stroke your chins, and swear by your beards that I am a knave.

Cel. By our beards, if we had them, thou art.

Touch. By my knavery, if I had it, then I were ; but, if you swear by that that is not, you are not forswn : no more was this knight, swearing by his honour, for he never had any ; or, if he had, he had sworn it away before ever he saw those pancakes or that mustard.

Cel. Prithee, who is 't that thou mean'st ?

Touch. One that old Frederick, your father, loves.



Cel. My father's love is enough to honour him enough : speak no more of him ; you'll be whipp'd for taxation one of these days.

Touch. The more pity, that fools may not speak wisely what wise men do foolishly.

Cel. By my troth, thou say'st true ; for since the little wit that fools have was silenced, the little foolery that wise men have makes a great show. Here comes Monsieur Le Beau.

Ros. With his mouth full of news.

Cel. Which he will put on us, as pigeons feed their young.

Ros. Then shall we be news-crammed.

Cel. All the better; we shall be the more marketable.

Enter Le Beau.

Bon jour, Monsieur Le Beau : what's the news ?

Le Beau. Fair Princess, you have lost much good sport.

Cel. Sport ! of what colour ?

Le Beau. What colour, madam ? how shall I answer you ?

Ros. As wit and fortune will.

Touch. Or as the Destinies decree.

Cel. Well said : that was laid on with a trowel.

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Touch. Nay, if I keep not my rank,—

Ros. Thou losest thy old smell.

Le Beau. You amaze me, ladies: I would have told you of good wrestling, which you have lost the sight of.

Ros. Yet tell us the manner of the wrestling.

Le Beau. I will tell you the beginning; and, if it please your ladyships, you may see the end; for the best is yet to do; and here, where you are, they are coming to perform it.

Cel. Well,—the beginning, that is dead and buried.

Le Beau. There comes an old man and his three sons,—

Cel. I could match this beginning with an old tale.

Le Beau.—three proper young men, of excellent growth and presence—

Ros. With bills on their necks. Be it known unto all men by these presents.

Le Beau.—the eldest of the three wrestled with Charles, the Duke's wrestler; which Charles in a moment threw him, and broke three of his ribs, that there is little hope of life in him: so he served the second, and so the third. Yonder they lie; the poor old man, their father, making such



pitiful dole over them, that all the beholders take his part with weeping.

Ros. Alas !

Touch. But what is the sport, monsieur, that the ladies have lost ?

Le Beau. Why, this that I speak of.

Touch. Thus men may grow wiser every day ! it is the first time that ever I heard breaking of ribs was sport for ladies.

Cel. Or I, I promise thee.

Ros. But is there any else longs to feel this broken music in his sides ? is there yet another dotes upon rib-breaking ? Shall we see this wrestling, cousin ?

Le Beau. You must, if you stay here ; for here is the place appointed for the wrestling, and they are ready to perform it.

Cel. Yonder, sure, they are coming : let us now stay and see it.

Flourish. Enter Duke Frederick, Lords, Orlando, Charles, and Attendants.

Duke F. Come on : since the youth will not be entreated, his own peril on his forwardness.

Ros. Is yonder the man ?

Le Beau. Even he, madam.



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Cel. Alas, he is too young ! yet he looks successfully.

Duke F. How now, daughter, and cousin ! are you crept hither to see the wrestling ?

Ros. Ay, my liege, so please you give us leave.

Duke F. You will take little delight in it, I can tell you ; there is such odds in the men. In pity of the challenger's youth, I would fain dissuade him, but he will not be entreated. Speak to him, ladies ; see if you can move him.

Cel. Call him hither, good Monsieur Le Beau.

Duke F. Do so : I'll not be by.

[*The Duke goes apart.*

Le Beau. Monsieur the challenger, the Princesses call for you.

Orl. I attend them with all respect and duty.

Ros. Young man, have you challenged Charles the wrestler ?

Orl. No, fair Princess ; he is the general challenger : I come but in, as others do, to try with him the strength of my youth.

Cel. Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years. You have seen cruel proof.



-of this man's strength : if you saw yourself with our eyes, or knew yourself with our judgment, the fear of your adventure would counsel you to a more equal enterprise. We pray you, for your own sake, to embrace your own safety, and give over this attempt.

Ros. Do, young Sir ; your reputation shall not therefore be misprised : we will make it our suit to the Duke that the wrestling might not go forward.

Orl. I beseech you, punish me not with your hard thoughts. I confess me much guilty, to deny so fair and excellent ladies anything : but let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial ; wherein if I be foil'd, there is but one shamed that was never gracious ; if kill'd, but one dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me : the world no injury, for in it I have nothing : only in the world I fill up a place, which may be better supplied when I have made it empty.

Ros. The little strength that I have, I would it were with you.

Cel. And mine, to eke out hers.

Ros. Fare you well : pray Heaven I be deceived in you !

Cel. Your heart's desires be with you !

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Cha. Come, where is this young gallant
that is so desirous to lie with his mother earth ?

Orl. Ready, Sir ; but his will hath in it a
more modest working.

Duke F. You shall try but one fall.

Cha. No, I warrant your Grace, you shall not
entreat him to a second, that have so mightily
persuaded him from a first.

Orl. An you mean to mock me after, you
should not have mock'd me before : but come your
ways.

Ros. Now Hercules be thy speed, young
man !

Cel. I would I were invisible, to catch the
strong fellow by the leg.

[*Charles and Orlando wrestle.*

Ros. O excellent young man !

Cel. If I had a thunderbolt in mine eye, I
can tell who should down.

[*Shout. Charles is thrown.*

Duke F. No more, no more.

Orl. Yes, I beseech your Grace : I am not
yet well breathed.

Duke F. How dost thou, Charles ?

Le Beau. He cannot speek, my lord.



Duke F. Bear him away. What is thy name young man ?

Charles is borne out.

Orl. Orlando, my liege ; the youngest son of Sir Roland de Bois.

Duke F. I would thou hadst been son to
some man else.

I would thou hadst told me of another
father.

William Shakespeare



LEARNING BRINGS MORE BLESSINGS TO MEN THAN IGNORANCE

Although, gentlemen, nothing could give me greater pleasure and satisfaction than your presence here, than this eager crowd in cap and gown, or than the honourable office of speaker, which I have already once or twice discharged before you, I must, to be candid, confess that I scarcely ever undertake these speeches voluntarily or of my own free will ; even though my own disposition and the trend of my studies make no impediment. In fact, if the choice had been offered me, I could well have dispensed with this evening's task. For I have learnt from the writings and sayings of wise men that nothing common or mediocre can be tolerated in an orator any more than in a poet, and that he who would be an orator in reality as well as by repute must first acquire a thorough knowledge of all the arts and sciences to form a complete background to his own calling. Since however this is impossible at my age, I would rather endeavour truly to deserve that reputation by long and concentrated study and



by the preliminary acquisition of that background, than snatch at a false repute by a premature and hastily acquired eloquence.

Afire and aglow with these plans and notions, I found that there was no more serious hindrance or obstacle than the loss of time caused by these constant interruptions, while nothing better promoted the development and well-being of the mind, contrary to what is the case with the body, than a culture and liberal leisure. This I believe to be the meaning of Hesiod's holy sleep and Endymion's nightly meetings with the moon ; this was the significance of Prometheus' withdrawal, under the guidance of Mercury, to the lofty solitude of the Caucasus, where at last he became the wisest of gods and men, so that his advice was sought by Jupiter himself concerning the marriage of Thetis. I can myself call to witness the woods and rivers and the beloved village elms, under whose shade I enjoyed (if I may tell the secrets of goddesses) such sweet intercourse with the Muses, as I still remember with delight. There I too, amid rural scenes and woodland solitudes, felt that I had enjoyed a season of growth in a life of seclusion.

I might indeed have hoped to find here also the same opportunity for retirement, had not the

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distressing task of speaking been unseasonably imposed upon me. This so cruelly deprived me of my holy meditations, so tormented my mind, intent upon other things, and so hindered and hampered me in the hard and arduous pursuit of learning, that I gave up all hope of finding any peace and began sadly to think how far removed I was from that tranquillity which learning had at first promised me, how hard my life was like to be amid this turmoil and agitation, and that all attempts to pursue Learning had best been abandoned. And so, almost beside myself, I rashly determined on singing the praise of Ignorance, since that was not subject to these disturbances, and I proposed as the theme of dispute the question whether Art or Ignorance bestowed greater blessings on its devotees. I know not how it is, but somehow either my destiny or my disposition forbade me to give up my old devotion to the Muses ; indeed, blind fate itself seemed of a sudden to be endowed with prudence and foresight and to join in the prohibition. Sooner than I could have expected, Ignorance had found her champion, and the defence of Learning devolved on me. I am delighted thus to have been played with, and am not ashamed to confess that I owe the restoration of my

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sight to Fortune, who is herself blind. For this she deserves my gratitude. Now I may at any rate be permitted to sing the praises of Learning, from whose embrace I have been torn, and as it were assuage my longing for the absent beloved by speaking of her. This can now hardly be called an interruption, for who would regard it as an interruption when he is called upon to praise or defend the object of his affection, his admiration, and his deepest desire ?

But, gentlemen, it is my opinion that the power of eloquence is most manifest when it deals with subjects which rouse no particular enthusiasm. Those which most stir our admiration can hardly be compassed within the bounds of a speech : the very abundance of material is a drawback, and the multiplicity of subjects narrows and confines the swelling stream of eloquence. I am now suffering from this excess of material : that which should be my strength makes me weak, and that which should be my defence makes me defenceless. So I must make my choice, or at least mention only in passing rather than discuss at length the numerous arguments on whose powerful support our cause relies for its defence and security. On this occasion it seems to me that my efforts must be directed entirely to show-

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ing how and to what extent Learning and Ignorance respectively promote that happiness which is the aim of every one of us. With this question I shall easily deal in my speech, nor need I be over-anxious about what objections Folly may bring against Knowledge, or Ignorance against Art. Yet the very ability of Ignorance to raise any objection, to make a speech, or even to open her lips in this great and learned assembly, is begged or rather borrowed from Art.

It is, I think, a belief familiar and generally accepted that the great Creator of the world, while constituting all else fleeting and perishable, infused into man, besides what was mortal, a certain divine spirit, a part of Himself, as it were, which is immortal, imperishable, and exempt from death and extinction. After wandering about upon the earth for some time, like some heavenly visitant, in holiness and righteousness, this spirit was to take its flight upward to the heaven whence it had come and to return once more to the abode and home which was its birthright. It follows that nothing can be reckoned as a cause of our happiness which does not somehow take into account both that everlasting life and our ordinary life here on earth. This eternal life, as almost everyone admits, is to be found



in contemplation alone, by which the mind is uplifted, without the aid of the body, and gathered within itself so that it attains, to its inexpressible joy, a life akin to that of the immortal gods. But without Art the mind is fruitless, joyless, and altogether null and void. For who can worthily gaze upon and contemplate the Ideas of things human or divine, unless he possesses a mind trained and ennobled by Art and Learning, without which he can know practically nothing of them : for indeed every approach to the happy life seems barred to the man who has no part in Learning. God would indeed seem to have endowed us to no purpose, or even to our distress, with this soul which is capable and indeed insatiably desirous of the highest wisdom, if he had not intended us to strive with all our might toward the lofty understanding of those things, for which he had at our creation instilled so great a longing into the human mind. Survey from every angle the entire aspect of these things and you will perceive that the great Artificer of this mighty fabric established it for His own glory. The more deeply we delve into the wondrous wisdom, the marvellous skill, and the astounding variety of its creation (which we cannot do without the aid of Learning), the

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greater grows the wonder and awe we feel for its Creator and the louder the praises we offer Him, which we believe and are fully persuaded that He delights to accept. Can we indeed believe, my hearers, that the vast spaces of boundless air are illuminated and adorned with everlasting lights, that these are endowed with such rapidity of motion and pass through such intricate revolutions, merely to serve as a lantern for base and slothful men, and to light the path of the idle and the slattern here below ? Do we perceive no purpose in the luxuriance of fruit and herb beyond the short-lived beauty of verdure ? Of a truth, if we are so little able to appraise their value that we make no effort to go beyond the crass perceptions of the senses, we shall show ourselves not merely servile and abject, but ungracious and wicked before the goodness of God ; for by our unresponsiveness and grudging spirit He is deprived of much of the glory which is His due, and of the reverence which His mighty power exacts. If then Learning is our guide and leader in the search after happiness, if it is ordained and approved by almighty God, and most conformable to His glory, surely it cannot but bring the greatest blessings upon those who follow after it.



I am well aware, gentlemen, that this contemplation, by which we strive to reach the highest goal, cannot partake of true happiness unless it is conjoined with integrity of life and uprightness of character. I know, too, that many men eminent for learning have been of bad character, and slaves to anger, hatred, and evil passions, while on the other hand many utterly ignorant men have shown themselves righteous and just. What of it ? Does it follow that Ignorance is more blessed ? By no meens. For the truth is, gentlemen, that though the corrupt morals of their country and the evil communications of the illiterate have in some instances lured into wicked courses a few men distinguished for their learning, yet the influence of a single wise and prudent man has often kept loyal to their duty a large number of men who lacked the advantages of Learning. And indeed a single household, even a single individual, endowed with the gifts of Art and Wisdom, may often prove to be a great gift of God, and sufficient to lead a whole state to righteousness. But where no Arts flourish, where all Learning is banished, there you will find no single trace of a good man, but savagery and barbarity stalk abroad. As instances of this I adduce no one country, province, or race alone, but Europe itself, forming



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as it does one fourth of the entire globe. Throughout this continent a few hundred years ago all the noble Arts had perished and the Muses had deserted all the Universities of the day, over which they had long presided ; blind illiteracy had penetrated and entrenched itself everywhere, nothing was heard in the schools but the absurd doctrines of drivelling monks, and that profane and hideous monster, Ignorance, assumed the gown and larded it on our empty platforms and pulpits and in our deserted professorial chairs. Then Piety went in mourning, and Religion sickened and flagged, so that only after prolonged suffering, and hardly even to this very day, has she recovered from her grievous wound.

But, gentlemen, it is, I believe, an established maxim of philosophy that the cognisance of every art and science appertains to the Intellect only and that the home and sanctuary of virtue and uprightness is the Will. But all agree that while the human Intellect shines forth as the lord and governor of all the other faculties, it guides and illuminates with its radiance the Will also, which would else be blind, and the Will shines with a borrowed light, even as the moon does. So, even though we grant and willingly concede that Virtue without Learning is more conducive to



happiness than Learning without Virtue, yet when these two are once wedded in happy union as they surely ought to be, and often are, then indeed Wisdom raises her head aloft and shows herself far superior, and shining forth takes her seat on high beside the king and governor, Intellect, and gazes upon the doings of the Will below as upon some object lying far beneath her feet ; and thereafter for evermore she claims as her right all excellence and splendour and a majesty next to that of God Himself.

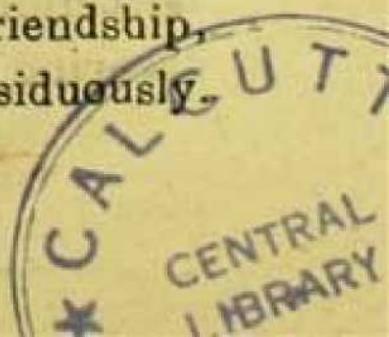
Let us now leave these heights to consider our ordinary life, and see what advantages Learning and Ignorance respectively can offer in private and in public life. I will say nothing of the argument that Learning is the fairest ornament of youth, the strong defence of manhood, and the glory and solace of age. Nor will I mention that many men highly honoured in their day, and even some of the greatest men of ancient Rome, after performing many noble deeds and winning great glory by their exploits, turned from the strife and turmoil of ambition to the study of literature as into a port and welcome refuge. Clearly these honoured sages realised that the best part of the life which yet remained to them must be spent to the best advantage. They were first



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among men ; they wished by virtue of these arts to be not the last among the gods. They had once striven for glory, and now strove for immortality. Their warfare against the foes of their country had been far other, but now that they were facing death, the greatest enemy of mankind, these were the weapons they took up, these the legions they enrolled, and these the resources from which they derived their strength.

But the chief part of human happiness is derived from the society of one's fellows and the formation of friendships, and it is often asserted that the learned are as a rule hard to please, lacking in courtesy, odd in manner, and seldom gifted with the graciousness which wins men's hearts. I admit that a man who is almost entirely absorbed and immersed in study finds it much easier to converse with gods than with men, either because he habitually associates with the gods but is unaccustomed to human affairs and a stranger among them, or because the mind, expanding through constant meditation on things divine and therefore feeling cramped within the narrow limits of the body, is less expert in the nicer formalities of social life. But if such a man once forms a worthy and congenial friendship, there is none who cultivates it more assiduously.





For what can we imagine more delightful and happy than those conversations of learned and wise men, such as those which the divine Plato is said often to have held in the shade of that famous plane-tree, conversations which all mankind might well have flocked to hear in spell-bound silence ? But gross talk and mutual incitement to indulge in luxury and lust is the friendship of ignorance, or rather the ignorance of friendship.

Moreover if this human happiness consists in the honourable and liberal joys of the mind, such a pleasure is to be found in Learning and Art as far surpasses every other. What a thing it is to grasp the nature of the whole firmament and of its stars, all the movements and changes of the atmosphere, whether it strikes terror into ignorant minds by the majestic roll of thunder or by fiery comets, or whether it freezes into snow or hail, or whether again it falls softly and gently in showers or dew ; then perfectly to understand the shifting winds and all the exhalations and vapours which earth and sea give forth ; next to know the hidden virtues of plants and metals and understand the nature and the feelings, if that may be, of every living creature ; next the delicate structure of the human body and the art of keeping it in health ; and, to crown all, the

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divine might and power of the soul, and any knowledge we may have gained concerning those beings which we call spirits and genii and daemons. There is an infinite number of subjects besides these, a great part of which might be learnt in less time than it would take to enumerate them all. So at length, gentlemen, when universal learning has once completed its cycle, the spirit of man, no longer confined within this dark prison-house, will reach out far and wide, till it fills the whole world and the space far beyond with the expansion of its divine greatness. Then at last most of the chances and changes of the world will be so quickly perceived that to him who holds this stronghold of wisdom hardly anything can happen in his life which is unforeseen or fortuitous. He will indeed seem to be one whose rule and dominion the stars obey, to whose command earth and sea hearken, and whom winds and tempests serve ; to whom, lastly, Mother Nature herself has surrendered, as if indeed some god had abdicated the throne of the world and entrusted its rights, laws, and administration to him as governor.

Besides this, what delight it affords to the mind to take its flight through the history and geography of every nation and to observe the



changes in the condition of kingdoms, races, cities, and peoples, to the increase of wisdom and righteousness. This, my hearers, is to live in every period of the world's history, and to be as it were coeval with time itself. And indeed, while we look to the future for the glory of our name, this will be to extend and stretch our lives backward before our birth, and to wrest from grudging Fate a kind of retrospective immortality. I pass over a pleasure with which none can compare—to be the oracle of many nations, to find one's home regarded as a kind of temple, to be a man whom kings and states invite to come to them, whom men from near and far flock to visit, while to others it is a matter for pride if they have but set eyes on him once. These are the rewards of study, these are the prizes which Learning can and often does bestow upon her votaries in private life.

What, then, of public life ? It is true that few have been raised to the height of majesty through a reputation for learning, and not many more through a reputation for uprightness. Such men certainly enjoy a kingdom in themselves far more glorious than any earthly dominion ; and who can lay claim to a twofold sovereignty without incurring the charge of ambition ? I



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will, however, add this one thing more : that there have hitherto been but two men who have ruled the whole world, as by divine right, and shared an empire over all kings and princes equal to that of the gods themselves ; namely Alexander the Great and Augustus, both of whom were students of philosophy. It is as though Providence had specially singled them out as examples to humanity, to show to what sort of man the helm or reins of government should be entrusted.

But, it may be objected, many nations have won fame by their deeds or their wealth, without owing anything to learning. We know of but few Spartans, for example, who took any interest in liberal education, and the Romans only admitted philosophy within the walls of their city after a long time. But the Spartans found a lawgiver in Lycurgus, who was both a philosopher and so ardent a student of poetry that he was the first to gather together with extreme care the writings of Homer, which were scattered throughout Ionia. The Romans, hardly able to support themselves after the various risings and disturbances which had taken place in the city, sent ambassadors to beg for the Decemviral Laws, also called the Twelve Tables, from Athens, which was at that time foremost in the study of the liberal Arts.

How are we to answer the objection that the Turks of to-day have acquired an extensive dominion over the wealthy kingdoms of Asia in spite of being entirely devoid of culture ? For my part, I have certainly never heard of anything in that state which deserves to be regarded as an example to us—if indeed one should dignify with the name of “state” the power which a horde of utter barbarians united by complicity in crime has seized by violence and murder. The provision of the necessaries of life, and their maintenance when acquired, we owe not to Art but to Nature ; greedy attacks on the property of others, mutual assistance for purposes of plunder, and criminal conspiracy are the outcome of the perversion of Nature. Some kind of justice indeed is exercised in such states, as might be expected ; for while the other virtues are easily put to flight, Justice from her throne compels homage, for without her even the most unjust states would soon fall into decay. I must not, however, omit to mention that the Saracens, to whom the Turks are indebted almost for their existence, enlarged their empire as much by the study of liberal culture as by force of arms.

If we go back to antiquity, we shall find that some states owed not merely their laws but their

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very foundation to culture. The oldest progenitors of every race are said to have wandered through the woods and mountains, seeking their livelihood after the fashion of wild beasts, with head erect but stooping posture. One might well think that they shared everything with the animals, except the dignity of their form ; the same caves, the same dens, afforded them shelter from rain and frost. There were then no cities, no marble palaces, no shining altars or temples of the gods ; they had no religion to guide them, no laws or law-courts, no bridal torches, no festal dance, no song at the joyful board, no funeral rites, no mourning, hardly even a grave paid honour to the dead. There were no feasts, no games ; no sound of music was ever heard : all these refinements were then lacking which idleness now misuses to foster luxury. Then of a sudden the Arts and Sciences breathed their divine breath into the savage breasts of men, and instilling into them the knowledge of themselves, gently drew them to dwell together within the walls of cities. Therefore of a surety cities may well expect to have a long and happy history under the direction of those guides by whom they were first of all founded, then firmly based on laws, and finally fortified by wise counsels.



What now of Ignorance ? I perceive, gentlemen, that Ignorance is struck blind and senseless, skulks at a distance, casts about for a way of escape, and complains that life is short and Art long. But if we do but remove two great obstacles to our studies, namely first our bad methods of teaching the Arts, and secondly our lack of enthusiasm, we shall find that, with all deference to Galen or whoever may have been the author of the saying, quite the contrary is the truth, and that life is long and Art short. There is nothing so excellent and at the same time so exacting as Art, nothing more sluggish and languid than ourselves. We allow ourselves to be outdone by labourers and husbandmen in working after dark and before dawn ; they show greater energy in a mean occupation, to gain a miserable livelihood, than we do in the noblest of occupations, to win a life of true happiness. Though we aspire to the highest and best of human conditions we can endure neither hard work nor yet the reproach of idleness ; in fact we are ashamed of owning the very character which we have not to have imputed to us.

But, we object, our health forbids late hours and hard study. It is a shameful admission that we neglect to cultivate our minds out of consideration for our bodies, whose health all should be

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ready to impair if thereby their minds might gain the more. Yet those who make this excuse are certainly for the most part worthless fellows ; for though they disregard every consideration of their time, their talents, and their health, and give themselves up to gluttony, to drinking like whales, and to spending their nights in gaming and debauchery, they never complain that they are any the worse for it. Since, then, it is their constant habit and practice to show eagerness and energy in the pursuit of vice, but listlessness and lethargy where any activity of virtue or intelligence is concerned, they cannot lay the blame on Nature or the shortness of life with any show of truth or justice. But if we were to set ourselves to live modestly and temperately, and to tame the first impulses of headstrong youth by reason and steady devotion to study, keeping the divine vigour of our minds unstained and uncontaminated by any impurity or pollution, we should be astonished to find, gentlemen, looking back over a period of years, how great a distance we had covered and across how wide a sea of learning we had sailed, without a check on our voyage.

This voyage, too, will be much shortened if we know how to select branches of learning that are useful, and what is useful within them. In the



first place, how many despicable quibbles there are in grammar and rhetoric ! One may hear the teachers of them talking sometimes like savages and sometimes like babies. What about logic ? That is indeed the queen of the Arts, if taught as it should be, but unfortunately how much foolishness there is in reason ! Its teachers are not like men at all, but like finches which live on thorns and thistles. "O iron stomachs of the harvesters !" What am I to say of that branch of learning which the Peripatetics call metaphysics ? It is not, as the authority of great men would have me believe, an exceedingly rich Art ; it is, I say, not an Art at all, but a sinister rock, a quagmire of fallacies, devised to cause shipwreck and pestilence. These are the wounds, to which I have already referred, which the ignorance of gownsmen inflicts ; and this monkish disease has already infected natural philosophy to a considerable extent ; the mathematicians too are afflicted with a longing for the petty triumph of demonstrative rhetoric. If we disregard and curtail all these subjects, which can be of no use to us, as we should, we shall be surprised to find how many whole years we shall save. Jurisprudence in particular suffers much from our confused methods of teaching, and from what is even worse, a jargon which one might well take

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for some Red Indian dialect, or even no human speech at all. Often, when I have heard our lawyers shouting at each other in this lingo, it has occurred to me to wonder whether men who had neither a human tongue nor human speech could have any human feelings either. I do indeed fear that sacred Justice will pay no attention to us and that she will never understand our complaints and wrongs, as she cannot speak our language.

Therefore, gentlemen, if from our childhood onward we never allow a day to pass by without its lesson and diligent study, if we are wise enough to rule out of every art what is irrelevant, superfluous, or unprofitable, we shall assuredly, before we have attained the age of Alexander the Great, have made ourselves masters of something greater and more glorious than that world of his. And so far from complaining of the shortness of life and the slowness of Art, I think we shall be more likely to weep and wail, as Alexander did, because there are no more worlds for us to conquer.

Ignorance is breathing her last, and you are now watching her final efforts and her dying struggle. She declares that glory is mankind's most powerful incentive, and that whereas a long succession and course of years has bestowed



glory on the illustrious men of old, we live under the shadow of the world's old age and decrepitude, and of the impending dissolution of all things, so that even if we leave behind us anything deserving of everlasting fame, the scope of our glory is narrowed, since there will be few succeeding generations to remember us. It is therefore to no purpose that we produce so many books and noble monuments of learning, seeing that the approaching conflagration of the world will destroy them all. I do not deny that this may indeed be so ; but yet to have no thought of glory when we do well is above all glory. The ancients could indeed derive no satisfaction from the empty praise of men, seeing that no joy or knowledge of it could reach them when they were dead and gone. But we may hope for an eternal life, which will never allow the memory of the good deeds we performed on earth to perish ; in which, if we have done well here, we shall ourselves be present to hear our praise ; and in which, according to a wise philosophy held by many, those who have lived temperately and devoted all their time to noble arts, and have thus been of service to mankind, will be rewarded by the bestowal of a wisdom matchless and supreme over all others.

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Let the idle now cease to upbraid us with the uncertainties and perplexities of learning, which are indeed the fault not so much of learning as of the frailty of man. It is this consideration, gentlemen, which disproves or mitigates or compensates for Socrates' famous ignorance and the Sceptics' timid suspension of judgment.

And finally, we may well ask, what is the happiness which Ignorance promises ? To enjoy what one possesses, to have no enemies, to be beyond the reach of all care and trouble, to pass one's life in peace and quiet so far as may be—this is but the life of a beast, or of some bird which builds its little nest in the farthest depths of the forest as near to the sky as it can, in security, rears its offspring, flits about in search of sustenance without fear of the fowler, and pours forth its sweet melodies at dawn and dusk. Why should one ask for that divine activity of the mind in addition ? Well, if such is the argument, we will offer Ignorance Circe's cup, and bid her throw off her human shape, walk no longer erect, and betake her to the beasts. To the beasts, did I say ? they will surely refuse to receive so infamous a guest, at any rate if they are either endowed with some kind of inferior reasoning power, as many maintain, or guided by some-



powerful instinct, enabling them to practise the Arts, or something resembling the Arts, among themselves. For Plutarch tells us that in the pursuit of game, dogs show some knowledge of dialectic, and if they chance to come to cross-roads, they obviously make use of a disjunctive syllogism. Aristotle points out that the nightingale in some sort instructs her offspring in the principles of music. Almost every animal is its own physician, and many of them have given valuable lessons in medicine to man : the Egyptian ibis teaches us the value of purgatives, the hippopotamus that of blood-letting. Who can maintain that creatures which so often give us warning of coming wind, rain, floods, or fair weather, know nothing of astronomy ? What prudent and strict ethics are shown by those geese which check their dangerous loquacity by holding pebbles in their beaks as they fly over Mount Taurus ! Our domestic economy owes much to the ants, our commonwealth to the bees, while military science admits its indebtedness to the cranes for the practice of posting sentinels and for the triangular formation in battle. The beasts are too wise to admit Ignorance to their fellowship and society ; they will force her to a lower station. What then ? To



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stocks and stones ? Why even trees, bushes, and whole woods once tore up their roots and hurried to hear the skilful strains of Orpheus. Often, too, they were endowed with mysterious powers and uttered divine oracles, as for instance did the oaks of Dodona. Rocks, too, show a certain aptitude for learning in that they reply to the sacred words of poets ; will not these also reject Ignorance ? Therefore, driven lower than any kind of beast, lower than stocks and stones, lower than any natural species, will Ignorance be permitted to find repose in the famous "non-existent" of the Epicureans ? No, not even there ; for Ignorance must be something yet worse, yet more vile, yet more wretched, in a word the very depth of degradation.

I come now to you, my learned hearers, for even without any words of mine I see in you not so much arguments on my side as darts which I shall hurl at Ignorance till she is slain. I have sounded the attack, do you rush into battle ; put this enemy to flight, drive her from your porticos and walks. If you allow her to exist, you yourselves will be that which you know to be the most wretched thing in the world. This cause is the personal concern of you all. So, if I have perchance spoken at much greater length



than is customary in this place, not forgetting that this was demanded by the importance of the subject, you will, I hope, pardon me, my judges, since it is one more proof of the interest I feel in you, of my zeal on your behalf, and of the nights of toil and wakefulness I consented to endure for your sakes. I have done.

John Milton.



HINTS TOWARDS AN ESSAY ON CONVERSATION

I have observed few obvious subjects to have been so seldom, or, at least, so slightly handled as this ; and, indeed, I know few so difficult to be treated as it ought, nor yet upon which there seemeth so much to be said.

Most things, pursued by men for the happiness of public or private life, our wit or folly have so refined, that they seldom subsist but in idea ; a true friend, a good marriage, a perfect form of government, with some others, require so many ingredients, so good in their several kinds, and so much niceness in mixing them, that for some thousands of years men have despaired of reducing their schemes to perfection. But, in conversation, it is, or might be otherwise ; for here we are only to avoid a multitude of errors, which, although a matter of some difficulty, may be in every man's power, for want of which it remaineth as mere an idea as the other. Therefore it seemeth to me, that the truest way to understand conversation, is to know the faults and errors to which it is subject, and from thence

every man to form maxims to himself whereby it may be regulated, because it requireth few talents to which most men are not born, or at least may not acquire without any great genius or study. For nature hath left every man a capacity of being agreeable, though not of shining in company ; and there are an hundred men sufficiently qualified for both, who, by a very few faults, that they might correct in half an hour, are not so much as tolerable.

I was prompted to write my thoughts upon this subject by mere indignation, to reflect that so useful and innocent a pleasure, so fitted for every period and condition of life, and so much in all men's power, should be so much neglected and abused.

And in this discourse it will be necessary to note those errors that are obvious, as well as others which are seldom observed, since there are few so obvious, or acknowledged, into which most men, some time or other, are not apt to run.

For instance: Nothing is more generally exploded than the folly of talking too much ; yet I rarely remember to have seen five people together, where some one among them hath not been predominant in that kind, to the great

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constraint and disgust of all the rest. But among such as deal in multitudes of words, none are comparable to the sober deliberate talker, who proceedeth with much thought and caution, maketh his preface, brancheth out into several digressions, findeth a hint that putteth him in mind of another story, which he promiseth to tell you when this is done ; cometh back regularly to his subject, cannot readily call to mind some person's name, holding his head, complaineth of his memory ; the whole company all this while in suspense ; at length says, it is no matter, and so goes on. And, to crown the business, it perhaps proveth at last a story the company hath heard fifty times before; or, at best, some insipid adventure of the relater.

Another general fault in conversation is, that of those who affect to talk of themselves: Some, without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives ; will relate the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them ; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in love, or in law. Others are more dexterous, and with great art will lie on the watch to hook in their own praise: They will call a witness to remember, they always foretold what



would happen in such a case, but none would believe them ; they advised such a man from the beginning, and told him the consequences, just as they happened ; but he would have his own way. Others make a vanity of telling their faults ; they are the strangest men in the world ; they cannot dissemble ; they own it is a folly ; they have lost abundance of advantages by it ; but, if you would give them the world, they cannot help it ; there is something in their nature that abhors insincerity and constraint ; with many other insufferable topics of the same altitude.

Of such mighty importance every man is to himself, and ready to think he is so to others ; without once making this easy and obvious reflection, that his affairs can have no more weight with other men, than theirs have with him ; and how little that is, he is sensible enough.

Where company hath met, I often have observed two persons discover, by some accident, that they were bred together at the same school or university, after which the rest are condemned to silence, and to listen while these two are refreshing each other's memory with the arch tricks and passages of themselves and their comrades.

I know a great officer of the army, who will sit for some time with a supercilious and im-

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tient silence, full of anger and contempt for those who are talking ; at length of a sudden demand audience, decide the matter in a short dogmatical way ; then withdraw within himself again, and vouchsafe to talk no more, until his spirits circulate again to the same point.

There are some faults in conversation, which none are so subject to as the men of wit, nor ever so much as when they are with each other. If they have opened their mouths, without endeavouring to say a witty thing, they think it is so many words lost: It is a torment to the hearers, as much as to themselves, to see them upon the rack for invention, and in perpetual constraint, with so little success. They must do something extraordinary, in order to acquit themselves, and answer their character, else the standers-by may be disappointed and be apt to think them only like the rest of mortals. I have known two men of wit industriously brought together, in order to entertain the company, where they have made a very ridiculous figure, and provided all the mirth at their own expense.

I know a man of wit, who is never easy but where he can be allowed to dictate and preside : he neither expecteth to be informed or entertained, but to display his own talents. His business is to

be good company, and not good conversation ; and, therefore, he chooseth to frequent those who are content to listen, and profess themselves his admirers. And, indeed, the worst conversation I ever remember to have heard in my life, was that at Will's coffee-house, where the wits (as they were called) used formerly to assemble ; that is to say, five or six men, who had writ plays, or at least prologues, or had share in a miscellany, came thither, and entertained one another with their trifling composures, in so important an air, as if they had been the noblest efforts of human nature, or that the fate of kingdoms depended on them ; and they were usually attended with an humble audience of young students from the inns of court, or the Universities, who, at due distance, listened to these oracles, and returned home with great contempt for their law and philosophy, their heads filled with trash, under the name of politeness, criticism and *belles lettres*.

By these means the poets, for many years past, were all overrun with pedantry. For, as I take it, the word is not properly used ; because pedantry is the too frequent or unreasonable obtruding our own knowledge in common discourse, and placing too great a value upon it ; by which definition, men of the court or the army

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may be as guilty of pedantry as a philosopher or a divine ; and, it is the same vice in women, when they are over copious upon the subject of their petticoats, or their fans, or their china. For which reason, although it be a piece of prudence, as well as good manners, to put men upon talking on subjects they are best versed in, yet that is a liberty a wise man could hardly take ; because, beside the imputation of pedantry, it is what he would never improve by.

The great town is usually provided with some player, mimic or buffoon, who hath a general reception at the good tables ; familiar and domestic with persons of the first quality, and usually sent for at every meeting to divert the company ; against which I have no objection. You go there as to a farce or a puppetshow ; your business is only to laugh in season, either out of inclination or civility, while this merry companion is acting his part. It is a business he hath undertaken, and we are to suppose he is paid for his day's work. I only quarrel, when in select and private meetings, where men of wit and learning are invited to pass an evening, this jester should be admitted to run over his circle of tricks, and make the whole company unfit for any other conversation, beside the indignity of confounding men's talents at so shameful a rate.



Raillery is the finest part of conversation ; but, as it is our usual custom to counterfeit and adulterate whatever is too dear for us, so we have done with this, and turned it all into what is generally called repartee, or being smart ; just as when an expensive fashion cometh up, those who are not able to reach it, content themselves with some paltry imitation. It now passeth for raillery to run a man down in discourse, to put him out of countenance, and make him ridiculous, sometimes to expose the defects of his person or understanding ; on all which occasions he is obliged not to be angry, to avoid the imputation of not being able to take a jest. It is admirable to observe one who is dexterous at this art, singling out a weak adversary, getting the laugh on his side, and then carrying all before him. The French from whence we borrow the word, have a quite different idea of the thing, and so had we in the politer age of our fathers. Raillery was to say something that at first appeared a reproach or reflection ; but, by some turn of wit unexpected and surprising, ended always in a compliment, and to the advantage of the person it was addressed to. And surely one of the best rules in conversation is, never to say a thing which any of the company can reasonably wish we had rather left unsaid ;

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nor can there anything be well more contrary to the ends for which people meet together, than to part unsatisfied with each other or themselves.

There are two faults in conversation, which appear very different, yet arise from the same root, and are equally blameable ; I mean, an impatience to interrupt others, and the uneasiness of being interrupted ourselves. The two chief ends of conversation are to entertain and improve those we are among, or to receive those benefits ourselves ; which whoever will consider, cannot easily run into either of those two errors ; because when any man speaketh in company, it is to be supposed he doth it for his hearers' sake, and not his own ; so that common discretion will teach us not to force their attention, if they are not willing to lend it ; nor on the other side, to interrupt him who is in possession, because that is in the grossest manner to give the preference to our own good sense.

There are some people, whose good manners will not suffer them to interrupt you ; but, what is almost as bad, will discover abundance of impatience, and lie upon the watch until you have done, because they have started something in their own thoughts which they long to be delivered of. Meantime, they are so far from regard-



ing what passes, that their imaginations are wholly turned upon what they have in reserve, for fear it should slip out of their memory ; and thus they confine their invention, which might otherwise range over a hundred things full as good, and that might be much more naturally introduced.

There is a sort of rude familiarity, which some people, by practising among their intimates, have introduced into their general conversation, and would have it pass for innocent freedom of humour, which is a dangerous experiment in our northern climate, where all the little decorum and politeness we have are purely forced by art, and are so ready to lapse into barbarity. This, among the Romans, was the raillery of slaves, of which we have many instances in Plautus. It seemeth to have been introduced among us by Cromwell, who, by preferring the scum of the people, made it a court entertainment, of which I have heard many particulars ; and, considering all things were turned upside down, it was reasonable and judicious : Although it was a piece of policy found out to ridicule a point of honour in the other extreme, when the smallest word misplaced among gentlemen ended in a duel.

There are some men excellent at telling a story, and provided with a plentiful stock of

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them, which they can draw out upon occasion in all companies ; and, considering how low conversation runs now among us, it is not altogether a contemptible talent ; however, it is subject to two unavoidable defects ; frequent repetition, and being soon exhausted ; so that whoever valueth this gift in himself, hath need of a good memory, and ought frequently to shift his company, that he may not discover the weakness of his fund ; for those who are thus endowed, have seldom any other revenue, but live upon the main stock.

Great speakers in public are seldom agreeable in private conversation, whether their faculty be natural, or acquired by practice, and often venturing. Natural elocution, although it may seem a paradox, usually springeth from a barrenness of invention and of words, by which men who have only one stock of notions upon every subject, and one set of phrases to express them in, they swim upon the superficies, and offer themselves on every occasion ; therefore, men of much learning, and who know the compass of a language, are generally the worst talkers on a sudden, until much practice hath inured and emboldened them, because they are confounded with plenty of matter, variety of notions, and of words, which they cannot readily choose, but are perplexed and entangled by too



great a choice ; which is no disadvantage in private conversation ; where, on the other side, the talent of haranguing is, of all others, most insupportable.

Nothing hath spoiled men more for conversation, than the character of being wits, to support which, they never fail of encouraging a number of followers and admirers, who list themselves in their service, wherein they find their accounts on both sides, by pleasing their mutual vanity. This hath given the former such an air of superiority, and made the latter so pragmatical, that neither of them are well to be endured. I say nothing here of the itch of dispute and contradiction, telling of lies, or of those who are troubled with the disease called the wandering of the thoughts, so that they are never present in mind at what passeth in discourse ; for whoever labours under any of these possessions, is as unfit for conversation as a madman in Bedlam.

I think I have gone over most of the errors in conversation, that have fallen under my notice or memory, except some that are merely personal, and others too gross to need exploding ; such as lewd or profane talk ; but I pretend only to treat the errors of conversation in general, and not the several subjects of discourse, which would be

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infinite. Thus we see how human nature is most debased, by the abuse of that faculty, which is held the great distinction between men and brutes; and how little advantage we make of that which might be the greatest, the most lasting, and the most innocent, as well as useful pleasure of life. In default of which, we are forced to take up with those poor amusements of dress and visiting, or the more pernicious ones of play, drink, and vicious amours, whereby the nobility and gentry of both sexes are entirely corrupted both in body and mind, and have lost all notions of love, honour, friendship, generosity; which, under the name of fopperies, have been for some time laughed out of doors.

This degeneracy of conversation, with the pernicious consequences thereof upon our humours and dispositions, hath been owing, among other causes, to the custom arisen, for some time past, of excluding women from any share in our society, further than in parties at play, or dancing, or in the pursuit of an amour. I take the highest period of politeness in England (and it is of the same date in France) to have been the peaceable part of King Charles the First's reign; and from what we read of those times, as well as from the accounts I have formerly met with from some



who lived in that court, the methods then used for raising and cultivating conversation were altogether different from ours. Several ladies, whom we find celebrated by the poets of that age, had assemblies at their houses, where persons of the best understanding, and of both sexes, met to pass the evenings in discoursing upon whatever agreeable subjects were occasionally started; and although we are apt to ridicule the sublime platonic notions they had, or personated, in love and friendship, I conceive their refinements were grounded upon reason, and that a little grain of the romance is no ill ingredient to preserve and exalt the dignity of human nature, without which it is apt to degenerate into everything that is sordid, vicious and low. If there were no other use in the conversation of ladies, it is sufficient that it would lay a restraint upon those odious topics of immodesty and indecencies, into which the rudeness of our northern genius is so apt to fall. And, therefore, it is observable in those sprightly gentlemen about the town, who are so very dexterous at entertaining a vizard mask in the park or the playhouse, that, in the company of ladies of virtue and honour, they are silent and disconcerted, and out of their element.

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There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves and entertain their company with relating of facts of no consequence, nor at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day ; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place ; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture, peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. It is not a fault in company to talk much ; but to continue it long is certainly one ; for, if the majority of those who are got together be naturally silent or cautious, the conversation will flag, unless it be often renewed by one among them, who can start new subjects, provided he doth not dwell upon them, but leaveth room for answers and replies.

Jonathan Swift.



EPICURUS, LEONTION AND TERNISSA

[This was Landor's own favourite among the Conversations, and in several ways Epicurus is like himself. The dialogue in its full form is long; the present text gives less than half of it.

Epicurus is walking with two girl pupils in a garden which he has just bought near Athens, and their talk wanders about between the garden, his philosophy and the pupils themselves: it has no dominating climax or focus of interest and can therefore be 'edited' without serious damage: the worst form of misrepresentation here is perhaps that it has acquired more continuity than Landor intended. Several passages in which Epicurus becomes tiresomely arch and skittish with the girls have been omitted, as have those sections dealing with his controversy with Theophrastus. To simplify the subject-matter several parts which refer in detail to Greek literature have been cut out as well.

What remains is, of course, not Greek in spirit; but it is a re-creation or interpretation of Greece that shows one mood of the balance and sense of delight in the world which so many writers, in their various moods, have found most valuable in what Greece has to offer.]



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Leontion. Account to me first for your choice of so strange a place to walk in: a broad ridge, the summit and one side barren, the other a wood of rose-laurels impossible to penetrate. The worst of all is, we can see nothing of the city or the Parthenon, unless from the very top.

Epicurus. The place commands, in my opinion, a most perfect view.

Leontion. Of what, pray?

Epicurus. Of itself; seeming to indicate that we, Leontion, who philosophize, should do the same.

Leontion. Go on, go on! say what you please: I will not hate any thing yet. Why have you torn up by the root all these little mountain ash-trees? This is the season of their beauty: come, Ternissa, let us make ourselves necklaces and armlets, such as may captivate old Sylvanus and Pan; you shall have your choice. But why have you torn them up?

Epicurus. On the contrary, they were brought hither this morning. Sosimenes is spending large sums of money on an olive-ground, and has uprooted some hundreds of them, of all ages and sizes. I shall cover the rougher part of the hill with them, setting the clematis and vine and honey-suckle against them, to unite them.



Ternissa. Oh what a pleasant thing it is to walk in the green light of the vine-leaves, and to breathe the sweet odour of their invisible flowers !

Epicurus. The scent of them is so delicate that it requires a sigh to inhale it ; and this, being accompanied and followed by enjoyment, renders the fragrance so exquisite. *Ternissa*, it is this, my sweet friend, that made you remember the green light of the foliage, and think of the invisible flowers as you would of some blessing from heaven.

Ternissa. I see feathers flying at certain distances just above the middle of the promontory : what can they mean ?

Epicurus. Cannot you imagine them to be feathers from the wings of Zethes and Caläis, who came hither out of Thrace to behold the favourite haunts of their mother Creithyia ? From the precipice that hangs over the sea a few paces from the pinasters she is reported to have been carried off by Boreas ; and these remains of the primeval forest have always been held sacred on that belief.

Leontion. The story is an idle one.

Ternissa. O no, Leontion ! the story is very true.



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Leontion. Indeed ?

Ternissa. I have heard not only odes, but sacred and most ancient hymns upon it ; and the voice of Boreas is often audible here, and the screams of Oreithyia.

Leontion. The feathers then really may belong to Caläis and Zethes.

Ternissa. I don't believe it ; the winds would have carried them away.

Leontion. The gods, to manifest their power, as they often do by miracles, could as easily fix a feather eternally on the most tempestuous promontory, as the mark of their feet upon the flint.

Ternissa. They could indeed ; but we know the one to a certainty, and have no such authority for the other. I have seen these pinasters from the extremity of the Piraeus, and have heard mention of the altar raised to Boreas : where is it ?

Epicurus. As it stands in the centre of the platform, we cannot see it from hence ; there is the only piece of level ground in the place.

Leontion. Ternissa intends the altar to prove the truth of the story.

Epicurus. Ternissa is slow to admit that even the young can deceive much less the old ; the gay, much less the serious.



Leontion. It is as wise to moderate our belief as our desires.

Epicurus. Some minds require much belief, some thrive on little. Rather an exuberance of it is feminine and beautiful. It acts differently on different hearts ; it troubles some, it consoles others ; in the generous it is the nurse of tenderness and kindness, of heroism and self-devotion ; in the ungenerous it fosters pride, impatience of contradiction and appeal, and, like some waters, what it finds a dry stick or hollow straw, it leaves a stone.

Ternissa. We want it chiefly to make the way of death an easy one.

Epicurus. There is no easy path leading out of life, and few are the easy ones that lie within it. I would adorn and smoothen the declivity, and make my residence as commodious as its situation and dimensions may allow ; but principally I would cast underfoot the empty fear of death.

Ternissa. Oh ! how can you ?

Epicurus. By many arguments already laid down : then by thinking that some perhaps, in almost every age, have been timid and delicate as Ternissa ; and yet have slept soundly, have felt no parent's or friend's tear upon their faces, no



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throb against their breasts: in short, have been in the calmest of all possible conditions, while those around were in the most deplorable and desperate.

Ternissa. It would pain me to die, if it were only at the idea that any one I love would grieve too much for me.

Epicurus. Let the loss of our friends be our only grief, and the apprehension of displeasing them our only fear.

Leontion. No apostrophes! no interjections! Your argument was unsound; your means futile.

Epicurus. Tell me then, whether the horse of a rider on the road should not be spurred forward if he started at a shadow.

Leontion. Yes.

Epicurus. I thought so: it would however be better to guide him quietly up to it, and to show him that it was one. Death is less than a shadow: it represents nothing, even imperfectly.

Leontion. Then at the best what is it? why care about it, think about it, or remind us that it must befall us? Would you take the same trouble, when you see my hair entwined with ivy, to make me remember that, although the leaves are green and pliable, the stem is fragile and rough,

and that before I go to bed I shall have many knots and entanglements to extricate ? Let me have them; but let me not hear of them until the time is come.

Epicurus. I would never think of death as an embarrassment, but as a blessing.

Ternissa. How ? a blessing ?

Epicurus. What, if it makes our enemies cease to hate us ? What, if it makes our friends love us the more ?

Leontion. Us ? According to your doctrine, we shall not exist at all.

Epicurus. I spoke of that which is consolatory while we are here, and of that which in plain reason ought to render us contented to stay no longer. You, Leontion, would make others better ; and better they certainly will be, when their hostilities languish in an empty field, and their rancor is tired with treading upon dust. The generous affections stir about us at the dreary hour of death, as the blossoms of the Median apple swell and diffuse their fragrance in the cold.

Ternissa. I cannot bear to think of passing the Styx, lest Charon should touch me; he is so old and wilful, so cross and ugly.

Epicurus. Ternissa ! Ternissa ! I would

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accompany you thither, and stand between.
Would not you too, Leontion ?

Leontion. I don't know.

Ternissa. Oh! that we could go together !

Leontion. Indeed !

Ternissa. All three, I mean—I said—or was going to say it. How ill-natured you are, Leontion, to misinterpret me ; I could almost cry.

Leontion. Do not, do not, Ternissa ! Should that tear drop from your eyelash you would look less beautiful.

Epicurus. Whenever I see a tear on a beautiful young face, twenty of mine run to meet it. If it is well to conquer a world, it is better to conquer two.

Ternissa. That is what Alexander of Macedon wept because he could not accomplish.

Epicurus. Ternissa ! we three can accomplish it; or any one of us.

Ternissa. How ? pray !

Epicurus. We can conquer this world and the next ; for you will have another, and nothing should be refused you.

Ternissa. The next by piety : but this, in what manner ?

Epicurus. By indifference to all who are indifferent to us; by taking joyfully the benefit



that comes spontaneously ; by wishing no more intensely for what is a hair's breadth beyond our reach than for a draught of water from the Ganges ; and by fearing nothing in another life.

Ternissa. This, O Epicurus ! is the great impossibility.

Epicurus. Do you believe the gods to be as benevolent and good as you are ? or do you not ?

Ternissa. Much kinder, much better in every way.

Epicurus. Would you kill or hurt the sparrow that you keep in your little dressing-room with a string around the leg, because he hath flown where you did not wish him to fly ?

Ternissa. No ! it would be cruel ; the string about the leg of so little and weak a creature is enough.

Epicurus. You think so ; I think so ; God thinks so. This I may say confidently : for whenever there is a sentiment in which strict justice and pure benevolence unite, it must be his.

Ternissa. O Epicurus ! when you speak thus—

Leontion. Well, Ternissa, what then ?

Ternissa. When Epicurus teaches us such sentiments as these, I am grieved that he has not so great an authority with the Athenians as some others have.

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Leontion. You will grieve more, I suspect, my Ternissa, when he possesses that authority.

Ternissa. What will he do ?

Leontion. Why turn pale ? I am not about to answer that he will forget or leave you. No; but the voice comes deepest from the sepulchre, and a great name hath its root in the dead body. If you invited a company to a feast, you might as well place round the table live sheep and oxen, and vases of fish and cages of quails, as you would invite a company of friendly hearers to the philosopher who is yet living. One would imagine that the iris of our intellectual eye were lessened by the glory of his presence, and that, like eastern kings, he could be looked at near only when his limbs are stiff, by waxlight, in closed curtains.

Epicurus. One of whom we know little leaves us a ring or other token of remembrance, and we express a sense of pleasure and of gratitude ; one of whom we know nothing writes a book, the contents of which might (if we would let them) have done us more good and might have given us more pleasure, and we revile him for it. The book may do what the legacy cannot; it may be pleasurable and serviceable to others as well as ourselves: we would hinder this too. In fact, all



other love is extinguished by self-love: beneficence, humanity, justice, philosophy, sink under it. While we insist that we are looking for truth, we commit a falsehood. It never was the first object with any one, and with few the second.

Feed unto replenishment your quieter fancies, my sweetest little Ternissa ! and let the gods, both youthful and aged, both gentle and boisterous, administer to them hourly on these sunny downs: what can they do better ?

Leontion. But those feathers, Ternissa, what god's may they be ? since you will not pick them up, nor restore them to Caläis nor to Zethes.

Ternissa. I do not think they belong to any god whatever; and shall never be persuaded of it unless Epicurus says it is so.

Leontion. O unbelieving creature! do you reason against the immortals ?

Ternissa. It was yourself who doubted, or appeared to doubt, the flight of Oreithyia. By admitting too much we endanger our religion. Beside, I think I discern some upright stakes at equal distances, and am pretty sure the feathers are tied to them by long strings.

Epicurus. You have guessed the truth.

Ternissa. Of what use are they there ?

Epicurus. If you have ever seen the foot of

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a statue broken off just below the ankle, you have then, Leontion and Ternissa, seen the form of the ground about us. The lower extremities of it are divided into small ridges, as you will perceive if you look around ; and these are covered with corn, olives, and vines. At the upper part, where cultivation ceases, and where those sheep and goats are grazing, begins my purchase. The ground rises gradually unto near the summit, where it grows somewhat steep, and terminates in a precipice. Across the middle I have traced a line, denoted by those feathers, from one dingle to the other ; the two terminations of my intended garden. The distance is nearly a thousand paces, and the path, perfectly on a level, will be two paces broad, so that I may walk between you ; but another could not join us conveniently. From this there will be several circuitous and spiral, leading by the easiest ascent to the summit ; and several more, to the road along the cultivation underneath : here will however be but one entrance. Among the projecting fragments and the massive stones yet standing of the boundary-wall, which old pomegranates imperfectly defend, and which my neighbour has guarded more effectively against invasion, there are hillocks of crumbling mould,



covered in some places with a variety of moss ; in others are elevated tufts, or dim labyrinths, of eglantine.

Ternissa. Where will you place the statues ? for undoubtedly you must have some.

Epicurus. I will have some models for the statues. Pygmalion prayed the gods to give life to the image he adored : I will not pray them to give marble to mine. Never may I lay my wet cheek upon the foot under which is inscribed the name of Leontion or Ternissa !

Leontion. Do not make us melancholy ; never let us think that the time can come when we shall lose our friends. Glory, literature, philosophy have this advantage over friendship : remove one object from them, and others fill the void ; remove one from friendship, one only, and not the earth, nor the universality of worlds, no, nor the intellect that soars above and comprehends them, can replace it !

Epicurus. Dear Leontion ! always amiable, always graceful ! How lovely do you now appear to me ! what beauteous action accompanied your words !

Leontion. I used none whatever.

Epicurus. That white arm was then, as it is now, over the shoulder of Ternissa ; and her

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breath imparted a fresh bloom to your cheek, a new music to your voice. No friendship is so cordial or so delicious as that of girl for girl ; no hatred so intense and immovable as that of woman for woman. In youth you love one above the others of your sex ; in riper age you hate all, more or less, in proportion to similarity of accomplishments and pursuits,—which sometimes (I wish it were oftener) are bonds of union to man. In us you more easily pardon faults than excellences in each other. Your tempers are such, my beloved scholars, that even this truth does not ruffle them ; and such is your affection, that I look with confidence to its unabated ardour at twenty.

Leontion. Oh, then I am to love Ternissa almost fifteen months !

Ternissa. And I am destined to survive the loss of it three months above four years !

Epicurus. Incomparable creatures ! may it be eternal ! In loving ye shall follow no example ; ye shall step securely over the iron rule laid down for others by the Destinies, and you forever be Leontion, and you Ternissa.

Leontion. Then indeed we should not want statues.

Ternissa. But men, who are vainer creatures,



would be good for nothing without them: they must be flattered, even by the stones.

Epicurus. Very true. Neither the higher arts nor the civic virtues can flourish extensively without the statues of illustrious men. But gardens are not the places for them. Sparrows wooing on the general's truncheon (unless he be such a general as one of ours in the last war), and snails besliming the emblems of the poet, do not remind us worthily of their characters. Porticos are their proper situations, and those the most frequented. Even there they may lose all honour and distinction, whether from the thoughtlessness of magistrates or from the malignity of rivals. Our own city, the least exposed of any to the effects of either, presents us a disheartening example. When the Thebans in their jealousy condemned Pindar to the payment of a fine for having praised the Athenians too highly, our citizens erected a statue of bronze to him.

Leontion. Jealousy of Athens made the Thebans fine him; and jealousy of Thebes made the Athenians thus record it.

Epicurus. And jealousy of Pindar, I suspect, made some poet persuade the archons to render the distinction a vile and worthless one, by placing his effigy near a king's,—one Evagoras of Cyprus.



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Ternissa. Evagoras, I think I remember to have read in the inscription, was rewarded in this manner for his reception of Conon, defeated by the Lacedemonians.

Epicurus. Gratitude was due to him, and some such memorial to record it. External reverence should be paid unsparingly to the higher magistrates of every country who perform their offices exemplarily ; yet they are not on this account to be placed in the same degree with men of primary genius. They never exalt the human race, and rarely benefit it ; and their benefits are local and transitory, while those of a great writer are universal and eternal.

If the gods did indeed bestow on us a portion of their fire, they seem to have lighted it in sport and left it ; the harder task and the nobler is performed by that genius who raises it clear and glowing from its embers, and makes it applicable to the purposes that dignify or delight our nature. I have ever said, “ Reverence the rulers.” Let then his image stand ; but stand apart from Pindar’s. Pallas and Jove ! defend me from being carried down the stream of time among a shoal of royalets, and the rootless weeds they are hatched on !

Ternissa. So much piety would deserve the



exemption, even though your writings did not hold out the decree.

Leontion. Child, the compliment is ill turned : if you are ironical, as you must be on the piety of Epicurus, Atticism requires that you should continue to be so, at least to the end of the sentence.

Ternissa. Irony is my abhorrence. Epicurus may appear less pious than some others, but I am certain he is more ; otherwise the gods would never have given him—

Leontion. What ? what ? let us hear !

Ternissa. Leontion !

Leontion. Silly girl ! were there any hibiscus or broom growing near at hand, I would send him away and whip you.

Epicurus. There is fern, which is better.

Leontion. I was not speaking to you : but now you shall have something to answer for yourself. Although you admit no statues in the country, you might at least methinks have discovered a retirement with a fountain in it : here I see not even a spring.

Epicurus. Fountain I can hardly say there is ; but on the left there is a long crevice or chasm, which we have never yet visited, and which we cannot discern until we reach it. This

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is full of soft mould, very moist, and many high-reeds and canes are growing there ; and the rock itself too drips with humidity along it, and is covered with more tufted moss and more variegated lichens. This crevice, with its windings and sinuosities, is about four hundred paces long, and in many parts eleven, twelve, thirteen feet wide, but generally six or seven. I shall plant it wholly with lilies of the valley, leaving the irises which occupy the sides as well as the clefts, and also those other flowers of paler purple, from the autumnal cups of which we collect the saffron ; and forming a narrow path of such turf as I can find there, or rather following it as it creeps among the bays and hazels and sweet-briar, which have fallen at different times from the summit and are now grown old, with an infinity of primroses at the roots. There are nowhere twenty steps without a projection and a turn, nor in any ten together is the chasm of the same width or figure. Hence the ascent in its windings is easy and imperceptible quite to the termination, where the rocks are somewhat high and precipitous : at the entrance they lose themselves in privet and elder, and you must make your way between them through the canes. Do not you remember where I carried you both across the muddy hollow in the foot-path ?

Ternissa. Leontion does.

Epicurus. That place is always wet ; not only in this month of Puanepsion, which we are beginning to-day, but in midsummer. The water that causes it comes out a little way above it, but originates from the crevice, which I will cover at top with rose-laurel and mountain-ash, with clematis and vine ; and I will intercept the little rill in its wandering, draw it from its concealment, and place it like Bacchus under the protection of the nymphs, who will smile upon it in its marble cradle, which at present I keep at home.

• • • •

Ternissa. All these labourers will soon finish the plantation, if you superintend them, and are not appointed to some magistrature.

Epicurus. Those who govern us are pleased at seeing a philosopher out of the city, and more still at finding in a season of scarcity forty poor citizens, who might become seditious, made happy and quiet by such employment.

Two evils, of almost equal weight, may befall the man of erudition : never to be listened to, and to be listened to always. Aware of these, I devote a large portion of my time and labours to the cultivation of such minds as flourish best

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in cities, where my garden at the gate, although smaller than this, we find sufficiently capacious. There I secure my listeners ; here my thoughts and imaginations have their free natural current, and tarry or wander as the will invites : may it ever be among those dearest to me !—those whose hearts possess the rarest and divinest faculty, of retaining or forgetting at option what ought to be forgotten or retained.

Leontion. The whole ground then will be covered with trees and shrubs ?

Epicurus. There are some protuberances in various parts of the eminence, which you do not perceive till you are upon them or above them. They are almost level at the top, and overgrown with fine grass ; for they catch the better soil brought down in small quantities by the rains. These are to be left unplanted ; so is the platform under the pinasters, whence there is a prospect of the city, the harbour, the isle of Salamis, and the territory of Megara. “ What then ! ” cried Sosimenes, “ you would hide from your view my young olives, and the whole length of the new wall I have been building at my own expense between us ! and, when you might see at once the whole of Attica, you will hardly see more of it than I could buy.”



Leontion. I do not perceive the new wall, for which Sosimenes, no doubt, thinks himself another Pericles.

Epicurus. Those old junipers quite conceal it.

Ternissa. They look warm and sheltering ; but I like the rose-laurels much better : and what a thicket of them here is !

Epicurus. Leaving all the larger, I shall remove many thousands of them ; enough to border the greater part of the walk, intermixed with roses.

Ternissa. Do, pray, leave that taller plant yonder, of which I see there are several springing in several places out of the rock : it appears to have produced on a single stem a long succession of yellow flowers ; some darkening and fading, others running up and leaving them behind, others showing their little faces imperfectly through their light green veils.

Leontion. Childish girl ! she means the mullein ; and she talks about it as she would have talked about a doll, attributing to it feelings and aims and designs. I saw her stay behind to kiss it ; no doubt, for being so nearly of her own height.

Ternissa. No, indeed, not for that ; but because I had broken off one of its blossoms un-



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heedingly, perhaps the last it may bear, and because its leaves are so downy and pliant ; and because nearer the earth some droop and are decaying, and remind me of a parent who must die before the tenderest of her children can do without her.

Epicurus. I will preserve the whole species ; but you must point out to me the particular one as we return. There is an infinity of other plants and flowers, or weeds as Sosimenes calls them, of which he has cleared his olive-yard, and which I shall adopt. Twenty of his slaves came in yesterday, laden with hyacinths and narcissuses, anemones and jonquils. "The curses of our vineyards," cried he, "and good neither for man nor beast. I have another estate infested with lilies of the valley : I should not wonder if you accepted these too."

"And with thanks," answered I.

The whole of his remark I could not collect : he turned aside, and (I believe) prayed. I only heard "Pallas"—"Father"—"sound mind"—"inoffensive man"—"good neighbour." As we walked together I perceived him looking grave, and I could not resist my inclination to smile as I turned my eyes toward him. He observed it, at first with unconcern, but by degrees some



doubts arose within him, and he said, “ Epicurus, you have been throwing away no less than half a talent on this sorry piece of mountain, and I fear you are about to waste as much in labour : for nothing was ever so terrible as the price we are obliged to pay the workman, since the conquest of Persia and the increase of luxury in our city. Under three obols none will do his day's work. But what, in the name of all the deities, could induce you to plant those roots, which other people dig up and throw away ?”

“ I have been doing,” said I, “ the same thing my whole life through, Sosimenes !”

“ How !” cried he ; “ I never knew that.”

“ Those very doctrines,” added I, “ which others hate and extirpate, I inculcate and cherish. They bring no riches, and therefore are thought to bring no advantage ; to me, they appear the more advantageous for that reason. They give us immediately what we solicit through the means of wealth. We toil for the wealth first ; and then it remains to be proved whether we can purchase with it what we look for. Now, to carry our money to the market, and not to find in the market our money's worth, is great vexation ; yet much greater has already preceded, in-



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running up and down for it among so many competitors, and through so many thieves."

After a while he rejoined, " You really, then, have not overreached me ?"

" In what, my friend ?" said I.

" These roots," he answered, " may perhaps be good and saleable for some purpose. Shall you send them into Persia ? or whither ?"

" Sosimenes, I shall make love-potions of the flowers."

Leontion. O Epicurus ! should it ever be known in Athens that they are good for this, you will not have, with all your fences of prunes and pomegranates, and precipices with briar upon them, a single root left under ground after the month of Elaphebolion.

Epicurus. It is not every one that knows the preparation.

Leontion. Everybody will try it.

Epicurus. And you, too, Ternissa ?

Ternissa. Will you teach me ?

Epicurus. This, and any thing else I know. We must walk together when they are in flower.

Ternissa. And can you teach me, then ?

Epicurus. I teach by degrees.

Leontion. By very slow ones, Epicurus ! I have no patience with you ; tell us directly.



Epicurus. It is very material what kind of recipient you bring with you. Enchantresses use a brazen one ; silver and gold are employed in other arts.

Leontion. I will bring any.

Ternissa. My mother has a fine golden one. She will lend it me ; she allows me every thing.

Epicurus. Leontion and Ternissa, those eyes of yours brighten at inquiry, as if they carried a light within them for a guidance.

Leontion. No flattery !

Ternissa. No flattery ! Come, teach us !

Epicurus. Will you hear me through a silence ?

Leontion. We promise.

Epicurus. Sweet girls ! the calm pleasures, such as I hope you will ever find in your walks among these gardens, will improve your beauty, animate your discourse, and correct the little that may hereafter rise up for correction in your dispositions. The smiling ideas left in our bosoms from our infancy, that many plants are the favourites of the gods, and that others were even the objects of their love,—having once been invested with the human form, beautiful and lively and happy as yourselves,—give them an interest beyond the vision ; yes, and a station—

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let me say it—on the vestibule of our affections. Resign your ingenuous hearts to simple pleasures ; and there is none in man, where men are Attic, that will not follow and outstrip their movements.

Ternissa. O Epicurus !

Epicurus. What said Ternissa ?

Leontion. Some of those anemones, I do think, must be still in blossom. Ternissa's golden cup is at home ; but she has brought with her a little vase for the filter—and has filled it to the brim.—Do not hide your head behind my shoulder, Ternissa ; no, nor in my lap.

Epicurus. Yes, there let it lie,—the lovelier for that tendril of sunny brown hair upon it. How it falls and rises ! Which is the hair ? which the shadow ?

Leontion. Let the hair rest.

Epicurus. I must not, perhaps, clasp the shadow !

Leontion. You philosophers are fond of such unsubstantial things. Oh, you have taken my volume ! This is deceit.

You live so little in public, and entertain such a contempt for opinion, as to be both indifferent and ignorant what it is that people blame you for.

Epicurus. I know what it is I should blame myself for, if I attended to them. Prove them



to be wiser and more disinterested in their wisdom than I am, and I will then go down to them and listen to them. When I have well considered a thing, I deliver it,—regardless of what those think who neither take the time nor possess the faculty of considering any thing well, and who have always lived far remote from the scope of our speculations.

Leontion. In the volume you snatched away from me so slily, I have defended a position of yours which many philosophers turn into ridicule: namely, that politeness is among the virtues. I wish you yourself had spoken more at large upon the subject.

Epicurus. It is one upon which a lady is likely to display more ingenuity and discernment. If philosophers have ridiculed my sentiment, the reason is, it is among those virtues which in general they find most difficult to assume or counterfeit.

Leontion. Surely life runs on the smoother for this equability and polish; and the gratification it affords is more extensive than is afforded even by the highest virtue. Courage, on nearly all occasions, inflicts as much of evil as it imparts of good. It may be exerted in defence of our country, in defence of those who love us, in



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defence of the harmless and the helpless ; but those against whom it is thus exerted may possess an equal share of it. If they succeed, then manifestly the ill it produces is greater than the benefit ; if they succumb, it is nearly as great. For many of their adversaries are first killed and maimed, and many of their own kindred are left to lament the consequences of the aggression.

Epicurus. You have spoken first of courage, as that virtue which attracts your sex principally.

Ternissa. Not me ; I am always afraid of it. I love those best who can tell me the most things I never knew before, and who have patience with me, and look kindly while they teach me, and almost as if they were waiting for fresh questions. Now let me hear directly what you were about to say to Leontion.

Epicurus. I was proceeding to remark that temperance comes next ; and temperance has then its highest merit when it is the support of civility and politeness. So that I think I am right and equitable in attributing to politeness a distinguished rank, not among the ornaments of life, but among the virtues. And you, Leontion and Ternissa, will have leaned the more propensely toward this opinion, if you considered, as I am sure you did, that the peace and concord



of families, friends, and cities are preserved by it ; in other terms, the harmony of the world.

Ternissa. Leontion spoke of courage, you of temperance ; the next great virtue, in the division made by the philosophers, is justice.

Epicurus. Temperance includes it ; for temperance is imperfect if it is only an abstinence from too much food, too much wine, too much conviviality or other luxury. It indicates every kind of forbearance. Justice is forbearance from what belongs to another. Giving to this one rightly what that one would hold wrongfully is justice in magistrature, not in the abstract, and is only a part of its office. The perfectly temperate man is also the perfectly just man ; but the perfectly just man (as philosophers now define him) may not be the perfectly temperate one. I include the less in the greater.

Leontion. We hear of judges, and upright ones too, being immoderate eaters and drinkers.

Epicurus. The Lacedemonians are temperate in food and courageous in battle ; but men like these, if they existed in sufficient numbers, would devastate the universe. We alone, we Athenians, with less military skill perhaps, and certainly less rigid abstinence from voluptuousness and luxury, have set before it the only grand example of

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social government and of polished life. From us the seed is scattered ; from us flow the streams that irrigate it ; and ours are the hands, O Leontion, that collect it, cleanse it, deposit it, and convey and distribute it sound and weighty through every race and age. Exhausted as we are by war, we can do nothing better than lie down and doze while the weather is fine overhead, and dream (if we can) that we are affluent and free.

O sweet sea-air ! how bland art thou and refreshing ! Breathe upon Leontion ! breathe upon Ternissa ! bring them health and spirits and serenity, many springs and many summers, and when the vine-leaves have reddened and rustle under their feet !

These, my beloved girls, are the children of Eternity : they played around Theseus and the beauteous Amazon ; they gave to Pallas the bloom of Venus, and to Venus the animation of Pallas. Is it not better to enjoy by the hour their soft, salubrious influence, than to catch by fits the rancid breath of demagogues ; than to swell and move under it without or against our will ; than to acquire the semblance of eloquence by the bitterness of passion, the tone of philosophy by disappointment, or the credit of prudence by



distrust ? Can fortune, can industry, can desert itself, bestow on us any thing we have not here ?

Leontion. And when shall those three meet ? The gods have never united them, knowing that men would put them asunder at their first appearance.

Epicurus. I am glad to leave the city as often as possible, full as it is of high and glorious reminiscences, and am inclined much rather to indulge in quieter scenes, whither the Graces and Friendship lead me. I would not contend even with men able to contend with me. Good men may differ widely from me, and wiser ones misunderstand me ; for, their wisdom having raised up to them schools of their own, they have not found leisure to converse with me ; and from others they have received a partial and inexact report. My opinion is, that certain things are indifferent and unworthy of pursuit or attention, as lying beyond our research and almost our conjecture ; which things the generality of philosophers (for the generality are speculative) deem of the first importance. Questions relating to them I answer evasively, or altogether decline. Again, there are modes of living which are suitable to some and unsuitable to others. What I myself follow and embrace, what I recommend

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to the studious, to the irritable, to the weak in health, would ill agree with the commonality of citizens. Yet my adversaries cry out, "Such is the opinion and practice of Epicurus!" For instance, I have never taken a wife, and never will take one; but he from among the mass, who should avow his imitation of my example, would act as wisely and more religiously in saying that he chose celibacy because Pallas had done the same.

Leontion. If Pallas had many such votaries she would soon have few citizens to supply them.

Epicurus. And extremely bad ones, if all followed me in retiring from the offices of magistracy and of war. Having seen that the most sensible men are the most unhappy, I could not but examine the causes of it; and, finding that the same sensibility to which they are indebted for the activity of their intellect is also the restless mover of their jealousy and ambition, I would lead them aside from whatever operates upon these, and throw under their feet the terrors their imagination has created. My philosophy is not for the populace nor for the proud: the ferocious will never attain it; the gentle will embrace it but will not call it mine. I do not desire that they should: let



them rest their heads upon that part of the pillow which they find the softest, and enjoy their own dreams unbroken.

Leontion. The old are all against you, for the name of pleasure is an affront to them: they know no other kind of it than that which has flowered and seeded, and of which the withered stems have indeed a rueful look. What we call dry they call sound; nothing must retain any juice in it: their pleasure is in chewing what is hard, not in tasting what is savory.

Epicurus. Unhappily the aged are retentive of long-acquired maxims, and insensible to new impressions, whether from fancy or from truth: in fact, their eyes blend the two together. Well might the poet tell us,—

Fewer the gifts that gnarled Age presents
To elegantly-handed Infancy,
Than elegantly-handed Infancy
Presents to gnarled Age. From both they drop;
The middle course of life receives them all,
Save the light few that laughing Youth runs
off with,
Unvalued as a mistress or a flower.

Leontion. It is reported by the experienced that our last loves and our first are of equal interest to us.



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Ternissa. Surely they are. What is the difference? Can you really mean to say, O Leontion, that there are any intermediate? Why do you look aside? And you too refuse to answer me so easy and plain a question!

Leontion (to Epicurus). Although you teach us the necessity of laying a strong hand on the strong affections, you never pull one feather from the wing of Love.

Epicurus. I am not so irreligious.

Ternissa. I think he could only twitch it just enough to make the gentle god turn round, and smile on him.

Leontion. You know little about the matter, but may live to know all. Whatever we may talk of torments, as some do, there must surely be more pleasure in desiring and not possessing, than in possessing and not desiring.

Epicurus. Perhaps so: but consult the intelligent. Certainly there is a middle state between love and friendship, more delightful than either, but more difficult to remain in.

Leontion. To be preferred to all others is the supremacy of bliss. Do not you think so, Ternissa?

Ternissa. It is indeed what the wise and



the powerful and the beautiful chiefly aim at : Leontion has attained it.

Epicurus. Delightful, no doubt, is such supremacy; but far more delightful is the certainty that there never was any one quite near enough to be given up for us. To be preferred is hardly a compensation for having been long compared. The breath of another's sigh bedims and hangs pertinaciously about the image we adore.

Leontion. When Friendship has taken the place of Love, she ought to make his absence as little a cause of regret as possible ; and it is gracious in her to imitate his demeanour and his words.

Epicurus. I can repeat them more easily than imitate them.

* * *

Epicurus. Man is a hater of truth, a lover of fiction.

Leontion. How then happens it that children, when you have related to them any story which has greatly interested them, ask immediately and impatiently, *is it true ?*

Epicurus. Children are not men or women ; they are almost as different creatures, in many respects, as if they never were to be the one or the other : they are as unlike as buds are unlike

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flowers, and almost as blossoms are unlike fruits. Greatly are they better than they are about to be, unless Philosophy raises her hand above them when the noon is coming on, and shelters them at one season from the heats that would scorch and wither, and at another from the storms that would shatter and subvert them. There are nations, it is reported, which aim their arrows and javelins at the sun and moon, on occasions of eclipse, or any other offence ; but I never have heard that the sun and moon abated their course through the heavens for it, or looked more angrily when they issued forth again to shed light on their antagonists. They went onward all the while in their own serenity and clearness, through unobstructed paths, without diminution and without delay : it was only the little world below that was in darkness. Philosophy lets her light descend and enter wherever there is a passage for it, she takes advantage of the smallest crevice, but the rays are rebutted by the smallest obstruction. Polemics can never be philosophers or philotheists ; they serve men ill, and their gods no better ; they mar what is solid in earthly bliss by animosities and dissensions, and intercept the span of azure at which the weary and the sorrowful would look up.



• • •

Epicurus. I esteem all the wise ; but I entertain no wish to imitate all of them in every thing. What was convenient and befitting in one or other of them, might be inconvenient and unbefitting in me. Great names ought to bear us up and carry us through, but never to run away with us. Peculiarity and solitariness give an idea to weak minds of something grand, authoritative, and god-like. To be wise indeed, and happy and self-possessed, we must often be alone ; and abstain rather more than seems desirable even from the better few.

Ternissa. You have commanded us at all times to ask you any thing we do not understand : why then use the phrase "what is called society"? as if there could be a doubt whether we are in society when we converse with many.

Epicurus. We may meet and converse with thousands : you and Leontion and myself could associate with few. *Society*, in the philosophical sense of the word, is almost the contrary of what it is in the common acceptation.

Leontion. Now go on with your discourse.

Epicurus. When we have once acquired that intelligence of which we have been in pursuit,



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we may relax our minds, and lay the produce of our chase at the feet of those we love.

Leontion. Philosophers seem to imagine that they can be visible and invisible at will ; that they can be admired for the display of their tenets, and unobserved in the workings of their spleen. None of those whom I remember, or whose writings I have perused, was quite exempt from it.....

Epicurus. I found in my early days, among the celebrated philosophers of Greece, a love of domination, a propensity to imposture, a jealousy of renown, and a cold indifference to simple truth. None of these qualities leads to happiness ; none of them stands within the precincts of Virtue. I asked myself, "What is the most natural and the most universal of our desires ? " I found it was, *to be happy*. Wonderful I thought it, that the gratification of a desire which is at once the most universal and the most natural, should be the seldomest attained. I then conjectured the means ; and I found that they vary, as vary the minds and capacities of men ; that, however, the principal one lay in the avoidance of those very things which had hitherto been taken up as the instruments of enjoyment and content : such as military commands, political offices, clients,



hazardous ventures in commerce, and extensive property in land.

Leontion. And yet offices, both political and military, must be undertaken ; and clients will throng about those who exercise them. Commerce too will dilate with Prosperity, and Frugality will square her farm by lopping off the angles of the next. *

Epicurus. True, Leontion ; nor is there a probability that my opinions will pervade the heart of Avarice or Ambition : they will influence only the unoccupied. Philosophy hath led scarcely a single man away from commands or magistracies, until he hath first tried them. Weariness is the repose of the politician, and apathy his wisdom. He fancies that nations are contemplating the great man in his retirement, while what began in ignorance of himself is ending in forgetfulness on the part of others. This truth at last appears to him ; he detests the ingratitude of mankind ; he declares his resolution to carry the earth no longer on his shoulders ; he is taken at his word : and the shock of it breaks his heart....There have been in all ages, and in all there will be, sharp and slender heads made purposely and peculiarly for creeping into the crevices of our nature. While we contemplate the magnificence



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of the universe, and mensurate the fitness and adaptation of one part to another, the small philosopher hangs upon a hair or creeps within a wrinkle, and cries out shrilly from his elevation that we are blind and superficial. He discovers a wart, he prys into a pore ; and he calls it knowledge of man. Poetry and criticism, and all the fine arts, have generated such living things, which not only will be coexistent with them, but will (I fear) survive them. Hence history takes alternately the form of reproof and of panegyric ; and science in its pulverized state, in its shapeless and colourless atoms, assumes the name of metaphysics. We find no longer the rich succulence of Herodotus, no longer the strong filament of Thucydides, but thoughts fit only for the slave, and language for the rustic and the robber. These writings can never reach posterity, nor serve better authors near us ; for who would receive as documents the perversions of venality and party ? Alexander we know was intemperate, and Philip both intemperate and perfidious : we require not a volume of dissertation on the thread of history, to demonstrate that one or other left a tailor's bill unpaid, and the immorality of doing so ; nor a supplement to ascertain on the best authorities which of the two



it was. History should explain to us how nations rose and fell, what nurtured them in their growth, what sustained them in their maturity ; not which orator ran swiftest through the crowd from the right hand to the left, which assassin was too strong for manacles, or which felon too opulent for crucifixion.

Leontion. It is better, I own it, that such writers should amuse our idleness than excite our spleen.

Ternissa. What is spleen ?

Epicurus. Do not ask her ; she cannot tell you. The spleen, Ternissa, is to the heart what Arimanes is to Oromazes.

Ternissa. I am little the wiser yet. Does he ever use such hard words with you ?

Leontion. He means the evil Genius and the good Genius, in the theogony of the Persians ; and would perhaps tell you, as he hath told me, that the heart in itself is free from evil, but very capable of receiving and too tenacious of holding it.

Epicurus. In our moral system, the spleen hangs about the heart and renders it sad and sorrowful, unless we continually keep it in exercise by kind offices, or in its proper place by serious investigation and solitary questionings. Other-



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wise, it is apt to adhere and to accumulate, until it deadens the principles of sound action, and obscures the sight.

Ternissa. It must make us very ugly when we grow old.

Leontion. In youth it makes us uglier, as not appertaining to it: a little more or less ugliness in decrepitude is hardly worth considering, there being quite enough of it from other quarters: I would stop it here, however.

Ternissa. Oh, what a thing is age!

Leontion. Death without death's quiet.

* * *

Walter Savage Landor.



EARLY MEMORIALS OF GRASMERE

Soon after my return to Oxford in 1807-8, I received a letter from Miss Wordsworth, asking for any subscriptions I might succeed in obtaining amongst my college friends in aid of the funds then raising on behalf of an orphan family, who had become such by an affecting tragedy that had occurred within a few weeks from my visit to Grasmere.

Miss Wordsworth's simple but fervid memoir not being within my reach at this moment, I must trust to my own recollections and my own impressions to retrace the story ; which, after all, is not much of a story to excite or to impress, unless for those who can find a sufficient interest in the trials and calamities of hard-working peasants, and can reverence the fortitude which, being lodged in so frail a tenement as the person of a little girl, not much, if anything, above nine years old, could face an occasion of sudden mysterious abandonment, and could tower up, during one night, into the perfect energies of womanhood, under the mere pressure of difficulty, and under the sense of new-born responsibilities



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awfully bequeathed to her, and in the most lonely, perhaps, of English habitations.

The little valley of Easedale,—which, and the neighbourhood of which, were the scenes of these interesting events,—is on its own account one of the most impressive solitudes amongst the mountains of the Lake district ; and I must pause to describe it. Easedale is impressive *as a solitude* ; for the depth of the seclusion is brought out and forced more pointedly upon the feelings by the thin scattering of houses over its sides, and over the surface of what may be called its floor. These are not above six at the most ; and one, the remotest of the whole, was untenanted for all the thirty years of my acquaintance with the place. *Secondly*, it is impressive from the excessive loveliness which adorns its little area. This is broken up into small fields and miniature meadows, separated, not—as too often happens, with sad injury to the beauty of the Lake country—by stone walls, but sometimes by little hedgerows, sometimes by little sparkling, pebbly “becks,” lustrous to the very bottom, and not too broad for a child’s flying leap, and sometimes by wild self-sown woodlands of birch, alder, holly, mountain ash, and hazel, that meander through the valley, intervening the different estates with



natural sylvan marches, and giving cheerfulness in winter by the bright scarlet of their berries. But there is a third advantage possessed by this Easedale, above other rival valleys, in the sublimity of its mountain barriers. In one of its many rocky recesses is seen a “force” (such is the local name for a cataract), white with foam, descending at all seasons with considerable strength, and, after the melting of snows with an Alpine violence.

Such is the solitude—so deep and so rich in miniature beauty—of Easedale; and in this solitude it was that George and Sarah Green, two poor and hard-working peasants, dwelt, with a numerous family of small children. Poor as they were, they had won the general respect of the neighbourhood, from the uncomplaining firmness with which they bore the hardships of their lot, and from the decent attire in which the good mother of the family contrived to send out her children to the Grasmere parish-school. It is a custom, and a very ancient one, in Westmorland—the same custom (resting on the same causes) I have witnessed also in southern Scotland—that any sale by auction of household furniture (and seldom a month passes without something of the sort) forms an excuse for the good women, throughout the whole circumference of perhaps four or five valleys, to



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assemble at the place of sale, with the nominal purpose of buying something they may happen to want. A sale, except it were of the sort exclusively interesting to farming *men*, is a kind of general intimation to the country, from the owner of the property, that he will, on that afternoon, be "at home" to all comers, and hopes to see as large an attendance as possible. Accordingly, it was the almost invariable custom—and often, too, when the parties were far too poor for such an effort of hospitality—to make ample provision, not of eatables, but of liquor, for all who came. Even a gentleman who should happen to present himself on such a festal occasion, by way of seeing the "humours" of the scene, was certain of meeting the most cordial welcome. The good woman of the house more particularly testified her sense of the honour done to her, and was sure to seek out some cherished and solitary article of china—a wreck from a century back—in order that he, being a porcelain man among so many delf men and women, might have a porcelain cup to drink from.

The main secret of attraction at these sales—many of which I have attended—was the social rendezvous thus effected between parties so remote from each other (either by real distance or by



virtual distance resulting from the separation effected by mountains 3,000 feet high) that, in fact, without some such common object, they would not be likely to hear of each other for months, or actually to meet for years. This principal charm of the "gathering," seasoned, doubtless, to many by the certain anticipation that the whole budget of rural gossip would then and there be opened, was not assuredly diminished to the men by the anticipation of excellent ale (usually brewed six or seven weeks before, in preparation for the event), and possibly or still more excellent *powsowdy* (a combination of ale, spirits, and spices); nor to the women by some prospect not so inevitably fulfilled, but pretty certain in a liberal house, of communicating their news over excellent tea. Even the auctioneer was always a character in the drama: he was always a rustic old humorist, and a jovial drunkard, privileged in certain good-humoured liberties and jokes with all bidders, gentle or simple, and furnished with an ancient inheritance of jests appropriate to the articles offered for sale,—jests that had, doubtless, done their office from Elizabeth's golden days, but no more, on that account, failing of their expected effect, with either man or woman of this nineteenth century, than the sun fails to gladden the heart



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because it is that same old superannuated sun that has gladdened it for thousands of years.

One thing, however, in mere justice to the Dalesmen of Westmorland and Cumberland, I am bound in this place to record. Often as I have been at these sales, and years before even a scattering of gentry began to attend, yet so true to the natural standard of politeness was the decorum uniformly maintained that even the old buffoon of an auctioneer never forgot himself so far as to found upon any article of furniture a jest fitted to call up a painful blush in any woman's face. He might, perhaps, go so far as to awaken a little rosy confusion upon some young bride's countenance, when pressing a cradle upon her attention ; but never did I hear him utter, nor would he have been tolerated in uttering a scurrilous or disgusting jest, such as might easily have been suggested by something offered at a household sale. Such jests as these I heard for the first time at a sale in Grasmere in 1814 ; and I am ashamed to say it, from some "gentlemen" of a great city. And it grieved me to see the effect, as it expressed itself upon the manly faces of the grave Dalesmen—a sense of insult offered to their women, who met in confiding reliance upon the forbearance of the men, and upon their regard for



the dignity of the female sex; this feeling struggling with the habitual respect they are inclined to show towards what they suppose gentle blood and superior education. Taken generally, however, these were the most picturesque and festal meetings which the manners of the country produced. There you saw all ages and both sexes assembled; there you saw old men whose heads would have been studies for Guido; there you saw the most colossal and stately figures amongst the young men that England has to show; there the most beautiful young women. There it was that the social benevolence, the innocent mirth, and the neighbourly kindness of the people, most delightfully expanded, and expressed themselves with the least reserve.

To such a scene it was,—to a sale of domestic furniture at the house of some proprietor in Langdale,—that George and Sarah Green set forward in the forenoon of a day fated to be their last on earth. The sale was to take place in Langdale-head; to which, from their own cottage in Easedale, it was possible in daylight, and supposing no mist upon the hills, to find out a short cut of not more than five or six miles. By this route they went; and, notwithstanding the snow lay on the ground, they reached their destination



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in safety. The attendance at the sale must have been diminished by the rigorous state of the weather ; but still the scene was a gay one as usual.

The time for general separation was considerably after sunset ; and the final recollections of the crowd with respect to George and Sarah Green were that, upon their intention being understood to retrace their morning path, and to attempt the perilous task of dropping down into Easedale from the mountains above Langdalehead, a sound of remonstrance arose from many quarters. However, at such a moment, when everybody was in the hurry of departure, and to such persons (persons, I mean, so mature in years and in local knowledge), the opposition could not be very obstinate: party after party rode off ; the meeting melted away, or, as the northern phrase is, *scaled*; and at length nobody was left of any weight that could pretend to influence the decision of elderly people. They quitted the scene, professing to obey some advice or other upon the choice of roads ; but, at as early a point as they could do so unobserved, began to ascend the hills everywhere open from the rude carriage-way. After this they were seen no more. They had disappeared into the cloud of death. Voices were



heard, some hours afterwards from the mountains—voices, as some thought, of alarm: others said, No,—that it was only the voices of jovial people, carried by the wind into uncertain regions. The result was that no attention was paid to the sounds.

That night, in little peaceful Easedale, six children sat by a peat fire, expecting the return of their parents, upon whom they depended for their daily bread. Let a day pass, and they were starving. Every sound was heard with anxiety; for all this was reported many hundred times to Miss Wordsworth, and to those who, like myself, were never wearied of hearing the details. Every sound, every echo amongst the hills, was listened to for five hours, from seven to twelve. At length the eldest girl of the family—about nine years old—told her little brothers and sisters to go to bed. They had been trained to obedience; and all of them, at the voice of their eldest sister, went off fearfully to their beds. What could be *their* fears it is difficult to say; they had no knowledge to instruct them in the dangers of the hills; but the eldest sister always averred that they had as deep a solicitude as she herself had about their parents. Doubtless she had communicated her fears to *them*. Some time in the course of the



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evening—but it was late, and after midnight—the moon arose, and shed a torrent of light upon the Langdale fells, which had already, long hours before, witnessed in darkness the death of their parents.

That night, and the following morning, came a further and a heavier fall of snow; in consequence of which the poor children were completely imprisoned, and cut off from all possibility of communicating with their next neighbours. The brook was too much for them to leap; and the little, crazy wooden bridge could not be crossed, or even approached with safety, from the drifting of the snow having made it impossible to ascertain the exact situation of some treacherous hole in its timbers, which, if trod upon, would have let a small child drop through into the rapid waters. Their parents did not return. For some hours of the morning the children clung to the hope that the extreme severity of the night had tempted them to sleep in Langdale; but this hope forsook them as the day wore away. Their father, George Green, had served as a soldier, and was an active man, of ready resources, who would not, under any circumstances, have failed to force a road back to his family, had he been still living; and this reflection, or rather semi-conscious feel-



ing, which the awfulness of their situation forced upon the minds of all but the mere infants, awakened them to the whole extent of their calamity. Wonderful it is to see the effect of sudden misery, sudden grief, or sudden fear, in sharpening (where they do not utterly upset) the intellectual perceptions. Instances must have fallen in the way of most of us. And I have noticed frequently that even sudden and intense bodily pain forms part of the machinery employed by nature for quickening the development of the mind. The perceptions of infants are not, in fact, excited by graduated steps and continuously, but *per saltum*, and by unequal starts. At least, within the whole range of my own experience, I have remarked that, after any very severe fit of those peculiar pains to which the delicate digestive organs of most infants are liable, there always became apparent on the following day a very considerable increase of vital energy and of quickened attention to the objects around them. The poor desolate children of Blentarn Ghyll, hourly becoming more pathetically convinced that they were orphans, gave many evidences of this awaking power as lodged, by a providential arrangement, in situations of trial that most require it. They huddled together, in the even-

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ing, round their hearth-fire of peats, and held their little family councils upon what was to be done towards any chance—if chance remained—of yet giving aid to their parents ; for a slender hope had sprung up that some hovel or sheepfold might have furnished them a screen (or, in Westmorland phrase, a *bield*) against the weather quarter of the storm, in which hovel they might even now be lying snowed up ; and, secondly, as regarded themselves, in what way they were to make known their situation, in case the snow should continue or should increase, for starvation stared them in the face if they should be confined for many days to their house.

Meantime, the eldest sister, little Agnes, though sadly alarmed, and feeling the sensation of *eeriness* as twilight came on and she looked out from the cottage-door to the dreadful fells on which, too probably, her parents were lying corpses (and possibly not many hundred yards from their own threshold), yet exerted herself to take all the measures which their own prospects made prudent. And she told Miss Wordsworth that, in the midst of the oppression on her little spirit from vague ghostly terrors, she did not fail, however, to draw some comfort from the consideration that the very same causes which produced their



danger in one direction sheltered them from danger of another kind,—such dangers as she knew, from books that she had read, would have threatened a little desolate flock of children in other parts of England; for she considered thankfully that, if *they* could not get out into Grasmere, on the other hand bad men, and wild seafaring foreigners, who sometimes passed along the high road even in that vale, could not get to *them*; and that, as to their neighbours, so far from having anything to fear in that quarter, their greatest apprehension was lest they might not be able to acquaint them with their situation ; but that, if this could be accomplished, the very sternest amongst them were kind-hearted people, that would contend with each other for the privilege of assisting them. Somewhat cheered with these thoughts, and having caused all her brothers and sisters—except the two little things, not yet of a fit age—to kneel down and say the prayers which they had been taught, this admirable little maiden turned herself to every household task that could have proved useful to them in a long captivity. First of all, upon some recollection that the clock was nearly going down, she wound it up. Next, she took all the milk which remained from what her mother had provided for the

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children's consumption during her absence and for the breakfast of the following morning,—this luckily was still in sufficient plenty for two days' consumption (skimmed or "blue" milk being only one halfpenny a quart, and the quart a most redundant one, in Grasmere)—this she took and scalded, so as to save it from turning sour. That done, she next examined the meal chest; made the common oatmeal porridge of the country (the "burgoo" of the Royal Navy), but put all of the children, except the two youngest, on short allowance; and, by way of reconciling them in some measure to this stinted meal, she found out a little hoard of flour, part of which she baked for them upon the hearth into little cakes; and this unusual delicacy persuaded them to think that they had been celebrating a feast. Next, before night coming on should make it too trying to her own feelings, or before fresh snow coming on might make it impossible, she issued out of doors. There her first task was, with the assistance of two younger brothers, to carry in from the peat-stack as many peats as might serve them for a week's consumption. That done, in the second place she examined the potatoes, buried in "brackens" (that is, with red fern): these were not many; and she thought it better to leave



them where they were, excepting as many as would make a single meal, under a fear that the heat of their cottage would spoil them if removed.

Having thus made all the provision in her power for supporting their own lives, she turned her attention to the cow. Her she milked ; but, unfortunately, the milk she gave either from being badly fed, or from some other cause, was too trifling to be of much consideration towards the wants of a large family. Here, however, her chief anxiety was to get down the hay for the cow's food from a loft above the outhouse ; and in this she succeeded but imperfectly from want of strength and size to cope with the difficulties of the case,—besides that the increasing darkness by this time, together with the gloom of the place, made it a matter of great self-conquest for her to work at all ; but as respected one night at any rate, she placed the cow in a situation of luxurious warmth and comfort. Then, retreating into the warm house, and " barring " the door, she sat down to undress the two youngest of the children ; them she laid carefully and cosily in their little nests upstairs, and sang them to sleep. The rest she kept up to bear her company until the clock should tell them it was midnight ; up to which

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time she had still a lingering hope that some welcome shout from the hills above, which they were all to strain their ears to catch, might yet assure them that they were not wholly orphans, even though one parent should have perished. No shout, it may be supposed was ever heard ; nor could a shout, in any case, *have* been heard, for the night was one of tumultuous wind. And, though amidst its ravings, sometimes they fancied a sound of voices, still, in the dead lulls that now and then succeeded, they heard nothing to confirm their hopes. As last services to what she might now have called her own little family, Agnes took precautions against the drifting of the snow *within* the door and *within* the imperfect window, which had caused them some discomfort on the preceding day ; and, finally, she adopted the most systematic and elaborate plans for preventing the possibility of their fire being extinguished,—which, in the event of their being thrown upon the ultimate resource of their potatoes, would be absolutely indispensable to their existence, and in any case a main element of their comfort.

The night slipped away, and morning came, bringing with it no better hopes of any kind. Change there had been none but for the worse.



The snow had greatly increased in quantity ; and the drifts seemed far more formidable. A second day passed like the first,—little Agnes still keeping her young flock quiet, and tolerably comfortable, and still calling on all the elders in succession to say their prayers, morning and night.

A third day came ; and, whether on that or on the fourth I do not now recollect, but on one or other, there came a welcome gleam of hope. The arrangement of the snow drifts had shifted during the night ; and, though the wooden bridge was still impracticable, a low wall had been exposed, over which, by a circuit which evaded the brook, it seemed possible that a road might be found into Grasmere. In some walls it was necessary to force gaps ; but this was effected without much difficulty, even by children ; for the Westmorland field walls are “open,”—that is, uncemented with mortar ; and the push of a stick will generally detach so much from the upper part of any old crazy fence as to lower it sufficiently for female, or even for childish, steps to pass. The little boys accompanied their sister until she came to the other side of the hill ; which, lying more sheltered from the weather, offered a path onwards comparatively easy. Here they parted ; and little

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Agnes pursued her solitary mission to the nearest house she could find accessible in Grasmere.

No house could have proved a wrong one in such a case. Miss Wordsworth and I often heard the description renewed of the horror which, in an instant, displaced the smile of hospitable greeting, when little weeping Agnes told her sad tale. No tongue can express the fervid sympathy which travelled through the vale, like fire in an American forest, when it was learned that neither George nor Sarah Green had been seen by their children since the day of the Langdale sale. Within half an hour, or little more, from the remotest parts of the valley—some of them distant nearly two miles from the point of rendezvous—all the men of Grasmere had assembled at the little cluster of cottages called “Kirktown,” from its adjacency to the venerable parish-church of St. Oswald. There were at the time I settled in Grasmere—viz., in the spring of 1809, and, therefore, I suppose, in 1807-8, fifteen months previously—about sixty-three households in the vale: and the total number of souls was about 265 to 270; so that the number of fighting men would be about sixty or sixty-six, according to the common way of computing the proportion; and the majority were athletic and powerfully built. Sixty, at



least, after a short consultation as to the plan of operations, and for arranging the kind of signals by which they were to communicate from great distances, and in the perilous events of mists or snowstorms, set off with the speed of Alpine hunters to the hills. The dangers of the undertaking were considerable, under the uneasy and agitated state of the weather ; and all the women of the vale were in the greatest anxiety until night brought them back, in a body, unsuccessful. Three days at the least, and I rather think five, the search was ineffectual : which arose partly from the great extent of the ground to be examined, and partly from the natural mistake made of ranging almost exclusively during the earlier days on that part of the hills over which the path of Easedale might be presumed to have been selected under any reasonable latitude of circuitousness. But the fact is, when the fatal accident (for such it has often proved) of a permanent mist surprises a man on the hills, if he turns and loses his direction, he is a lost man ; and, without doing this so as to lose the power of *s'orienter* all at once, it is yet well known how difficult it is to avoid losing it insensibly and by degrees. Baffling snow-showers are the worst kind of mists. And the poor Greens had, under

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that kind of confusion, wandered many a mile out of their proper track ; so that to search for them upon any line indicated by the ordinary probabilities would perhaps offer the slenderest chance for finding them.

The zeal of the people, meantime, was not in the least abated, but rather quickened, by the wearisome disappointments ; every hour of daylight was turned to account, no man of the valley ever came home to meals : and the reply of a young shoemaker, on the fourth night's return, speaks sufficiently for the unabated spirit of the vale. Miss Wordsworth asked what he would do on the next morning. " Go up again, of course," was his answer. But what if to-morrow also should turn out like all the rest ? " Why, go up in stronger force on the day after." Yet this man was sacrificing his own daily earnings without a chance of recompense. At length sagacious dogs were taken up ; and, about noonday, a shout from an aerial height, amongst thick volumes of cloudy vapour, propagated through repeating bands of men from a distance of many miles, conveyed as by telegraph into Grasmere the news that the bodies were found. George Green was lying at the bottom of a precipice from which he had fallen. Sarah Green was



found on the summit of the precipice ; and, by laying together all the indications of what had passed, and reading into coherency the sad hieroglyphics of their last agonies, it was conjectured that the husband had desired his wife to pause for a few minutes, wrapping her, meantime, in his own greatcoat, whilst he should go forward and reconnoitre the ground, in order to catch a sight of some object (rocky peak, or tarn, or peatfield) which might ascertain their real situation. Either the snow above, already lying in drifts, or the blinding snowstorms driving into his eyes, must have misled him as to the nature of the circumjacent ground ; for the precipice over which he had fallen was but a few yards from the spot in which he had quitted his wife. The depth of the descent and the fury of the wind (almost always violent on these cloudy altitudes) would prevent any distinct communication between the dying husband below and his despairing wife above ; but it was believed by the shepherds best acquainted with the ground, and the range of sound as regarded the capacities of the human ear under the probable circumstances of the storm, that Sarah might have caught, at intervals, the groans of her unhappy partner, supposing that his death were at all a lingering

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one. Others, on the contrary, supposed her to have gathered this catastrophe rather from the want of any sounds, and from his continued absence, than from any one distinct or positive expression of it ; both because the smooth and unruffled surface of the snow where he lay seemed to argue that he had died without a struggle, perhaps without a groan, and because that tremendous sound of "hurtling" in the upper chambers of the air which often accompanies a snowstorm, when combined with heavy gales of wind, would utterly suppress and stifle (as they conceived) any sounds so feeble as those from a dying man. In any case, and by whatever sad language of sounds or signs, positive or negative, she might have learned or guessed her loss, it was generally agreed that the wild shrieks heard towards midnight in Langdalehead announced the agonizing moment which brought to her now widowed heart the conviction of utter desolation and of final abandonment to her own solitary and fast-fleeting energies. It seemed probable that the sudden disappearance of her husband from her pursuing eyes would teach her to understand his fate, and that the consequent indefinite apprehension of instant death lying all around the point on which she sat had kept her stationary to the

very attitude in which her husband left her until her failing powers, and the increasing bitterness of the cold to one no longer in motion, would soon make those changes of place impossible which too awfully had made themselves known as dangerous. The footsteps in some places, wherever drifting had not obliterated them, yet traceable as to the outline, though partially filled up with later falls of snow, satisfactorily showed that, however much they might have rambled, after crossing and doubling upon their own tracks, and many a mile astray from their right path, they must have kept together to the very plateau or shelf of rock at which (*i.e.*, on which, and *below* which) their wanderings had terminated ; for there were evidently no steps from this plateau in the retrograde order.

By the time they had reached this final stage of their erroneous course, all possibility of escape must have been long over for both alike ; because their exhaustion must have been excessive before they could have reached a point so remote and high ; and, unfortunately, the direct result of all this exhaustion had been to throw them farther off their home, or from "*any dwelling-place of man,*" than they were at starting. Here, therefore, at this rocky



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pinnacle, hope was extinct for the wedded couple, but not perhaps for the husband. It was the impression of the vale that perhaps, within half-an-hour before reaching this fatal point, George Green might, had his conscience or his heart allowed him in so base a desertion, have saved himself singly, without any very great difficulty. It is to be hoped, however—and, for my part, I think too well of human nature to hesitate in believing—that not many, even amongst the meaner-minded and the least generous of men could have reconciled themselves to the abandonment of a poor fainting female companion in such circumstances. Still, though not more than a most imperative duty, it was such a duty as most of his associates believed to have cost him (perhaps consciously) his life. It is an impressive truth that sometimes in the very lowest forms of duty, less than which would rank a man as a villain, there is, nevertheless, the sublimest ascent of self-sacrifice. To do less would class you as an object of eternal scorn: to do so much presumes the grandeur of heroism. For his wife not only must have disabled him greatly by clinging to his arm for support; but it was known, from her peculiar character and manner, that she would be likely to rob him of his coolness and presence



of mind, by too painfully fixing his thoughts, where her own would be busiest, upon their helpless little family. “*Stung with the thoughts of home*”—to borrow the fine expression of Thomson in describing a similar case—alternately thinking of the blessedness of that warm fireside at Blentarn Ghyll which was not again to spread its genial glow through her freezing limbs, and of those darling little faces which, in this world, she was to see no more ; unintentionally, and without being aware even of that result, she would rob the brave man (for such he was) of his fortitude, and the strong man of his *animal* resources. And yet (such, in the very opposite direction, was equally the impression universally through Grasmere), had Sarah Green foreseen, could her affectionate heart have guessed, even the tenth part of that love and neighbourly respect for herself which soon afterwards expressed themselves in showers of bounty to her children ; could she have looked behind the curtain of destiny sufficiently to learn that the very desolation of these poor children which wrung her maternal heart, and doubtless constituted to her the sting of death, would prove the signal and the pledge of such anxious guardianship as not many rich men’s children receive, and that this overflowing



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offering to her own memory would not be a hasty or decaying tribute of the first sorrowing sensibilities, but would pursue her children steadily until their hopeful settlement in life : anything approaching this, known or guessed, would have caused her (so said all who knew her) to welcome the bitter end by which such privileges were to be purchased, and solemnly to breathe out into the ear of that holy angel who gathers the whispers of dying mothers torn asunder from their infants a thankful *Nunc dimittis* (Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace), as the farewell ejaculation rightfully belonging to the occasion.

The funeral of the ill-fated Greens was, it may be supposed, attended by all the Vale: it took place about eight days after they were found ; and the day happened to be in the most perfect contrast to the sort of weather which prevailed at the time of their misfortune. Some snow still remained here and there upon the ground ; but the azure of the sky was unstained by a cloud ; and a golden sunlight seemed to sleep, so balmy and tranquil was the season, upon the very hills where the pair had wandered,—then a howling wilderness, but now a green pastoral lawn in its lower ranges, and a glittering expanse of virgin snow in its higher. George Green had, I believe,



an elder family by a former wife ; and it was for some of these children, who lived at a distance, and who wished to give their attendance at the grave, that the funeral was delayed. At this point, because really suggested by the contrast of the funeral tranquillity with the howling tempest of the fatal night, it may be proper to remind the reader of Wordsworth's memorial stanzas :—

“ Who weeps for strangers ? Many wept
For George and Sarah Green :
Wept for that pair's unhappy fate
Whose graves may here be seen.

“ By night upon these stormy fells
Did wife and husband roam ;
Six little ones at home had left,
And could not find that home.

“ For any dwelling-place of man
As vainly did they seek :
He perished : and a voice was heard—
The widow's lonely shriek.

“ Not many steps, and she was left
A body without life—
A few short steps were the chain that bound
The husband to the wife.



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" Now do these sternly-featured hills
 Look gently on this grave ;
And quiet now are the depths of air,
 As a sea without a wave.

" But deeper lies the heart of peace,
 In quiet more profound ;
The heart of quietness is here
 Within this churchyard bound.

" And from all agony of mind
 It keeps them safe, and far
From fear and grief, and from all need
 Of sun or guiding star.

" O darkness of the grave ! how deep,
 After that living night—
That last and dreary living one
 Of sorrow and affright !

" O sacred marriage-bed of death !
 That keeps them side by side
In bond of peace, in bond of love,
 That may not be united."

Thomas De Quincey.



THE NORMEN

1

The collision between Russia and Turkey, which at present engages public attention, is only one scene in that persevering conflict, which is carried on, from age to age, between the North and the South,—the North aggressive, the South on the defensive. In the earliest histories this conflict finds a place ; and hence, when the inspired Prophets denounce defeat and captivity upon the chosen people or other transgressing nations, who were inhabitants of the South, the North is pointed out as the quarter from which the judgment is to descend. Nor is this conflict, nor is its perpetuity, difficult of explanation. The South ever has gifts of nature to tempt the invader, and the North ever has multitudes to be tempted by them. The North has been fitly called the storehouse of nations. Along the breadth of Asia, and thence to Europe, from the Chinese sea on the East, to the Euxine on the West, nay to the Rhine, nay even to the Bay of Biscay, running between and beyond the 40th and 50th degrees of latitude, and above the fruitful South, stretched



a vast plain, which has been from time immemorial what may be called the wild common and place of encampment, or again, the highway, or the broad horse-path, of restless population seeking a home. The European portion of this tract has in Christian times been reclaimed from its state of desolation, and is at present occupied by civilized communities ; but even now the East remains for the most part in its primitive neglect, and is in possession of roving barbarians.

It is the Eastern portion of this vast territory which I have pointed out, that I have now, Gentlemen, principally to keep before your view. It goes by the general name of Tartary : in width from north to south it is said to vary from 400 to 1,100 miles, while in length from east to west it is not far short of 5,000. It is of very different elevation in different parts, and it is divided longitudinally by as many as three or four mountain chains of great height. The valleys which lie between them necessarily confine the wandering savage to an eastward or westward course, and the slope of the land westward invites him to that direction rather than to the east. Then, at a certain point in these westward passages, as he approaches the meridian of the Sea of Aral, he finds the mountain-ranges cease, and open



upon him the opportunity, as well as the temptation, to roam to the North or to the South also. Up in the East, from whence he came, in the most northerly of the lofty ranges which I have spoken of, is a great mountain, which some geographers have identified with the classical Imaus ; it is called by the Saracens Caf, by the Turks Altai. Sometimes too it has the name of the Girdle of the Earth, from the huge appearance of the chain to which it belongs, sometimes of the Golden Mountain, from the gold, as well as other metals, with which its sides abound. It is said to be at an equal distance of 2,000 miles from the Caspian, the Frozen Sea, the North Pacific Ocean, and the Bay of Bengal : and, being in situation the furthest withdrawn from West and South, it is in fact the high capital of metropolis of the vast Tartar country, which it overcoks, and has sent forth, in the course of ages, innumerable populations into the illimitable and mysterious regions around it, regions protected by their inland character both from the observation and the civilizing influence of foreign nations.

To eat bread in the sweat of its brow - is the original punishment of mankind; the indolence of



the savage shrinks from the obligation, and looks out for methods of escaping it. Corn, wine, and oil have no charms for him at such a price ; he turns to the brute animals which are his aboriginal companions, the horse, the cow, and the sheep ; he chooses to be a grazier rather than to till the ground. He feeds his horses, flocks, and herds on its spontaneous vegetation, and then in turn he feeds himself on their flesh. He remains on one spot while the natural crop yields them sustenance ; when it is exhausted, he migrates to another. He adopts, what is called, the life of a *nomad*. In maritime countries indeed he must have recourse to other expedients ; he fishes in the stream, or among the rocks of the beach. In the woods he betakes himself to roots and wild honey ; or he has a resource in the chase, an occupation, ever ready at hand, exciting, and demanding no perseverance. But when the savage finds himself enclosed in the continent and the wilderness, he draws the domestic animals about him, and constitutes himself the head of a sort of brute polity. He becomes a king and father of the beasts, and by the economical arrangements which this pretension involves, advances a first step, though a low one, in civilization, which the hunter or the fisher does not attain.



And here, beyond other animals, the horse is the instrument of that civilization. It enables him to govern and to guide his sheep and cattle ; it carries him to the chase, when he is tempted to it ; it transports him and his from place to place ; while his very locomotion and shifting location and independence of the soil define the idea, and secure the existence, both of a household and of personal property. Nor is this all which the horse does for him ; it is food both in its life and in its death ;—when dead, it nourishes him with its flesh, and, while alive, it supplies its milk for an intoxicating liquor, which, under the name of *koumiss*, has from time immemorial served the Tartar instead of wine and spirits. The horse then is his friend under all circumstances, and inseparable from him ; he may be even said to live on horse back, he eats and sleeps without dismounting, till the fable has been current that he has a centaur's nature, half man and half beast. Hence it was that the ancient Saxons had a horse for their ensign in war ; thus it is that the Ottoman ordinances are, I believe, to this day dated from “the imperial stirrup,” and the display of horsetails at the gate of the palace is the Ottoman signal of war. Thus too, as the Catholic ritual measures intervals by “a Miserere,” and St.

Ignatius in his Exercises by “a Pater Noster,” so the Turcomans and the Usbeks speak familiarly of the time of a gallop. But as to houses, on the other hand, the Tartars contemptuously called them the sepulchres of the living, and, when abroad, could hardly be persuaded to cross a threshold. Their women, indeed, and children could not live on horseback ; them some kind of locomotive dwelling must receive, and a less noble animal must draw. The old historians and poets of Greece and Rome describe it, and the travellers of the middle ages repeat and enlarge the classical description of it. The strangers from Europe gazed with astonishment on huge wattled houses set on wheels, and drawn by no less than twenty-two oxen.

3

From the age of Job, the horse has been the emblem of battle ; a mounted shepherd is but one removed from a knight-errant, except in the object of his excursions ; and the discipline of a pastoral station from the nature of the case is not very different from that of a camp. There can be no community without order, and a community in motion demands a special kind of organization. Provision must be made for the separation, the

protection, and the sustenance of men, women, and children, horses, flocks, and cattle. To march without straggling, to halt without confusion, to make good their ground, to reconnoitre neighbourhoods, to ascertain the character and capabilities of places in the distance, and to determine their future route, is to be versed in some of the most important duties of the military art. Such pastoral tribes are already an army in the field, if not as yet against any human foe, at least against the elements. They have to subdue, or to check, or to circumvent, or to endure the opposition of earth, water, and wind, in their pursuits of the mere necessities of life. The war with wild beasts naturally follows, and then the war on their own kind. Thus when they are at length provoked or allured to direct their fury against the inhabitants of other regions, they are ready-made soldiers. They have a soldier's qualifications in their independence of soil, freedom from local ties, and practice in discipline ; nay, in one respect they are superior to any troops which civilized countries can produce. One of the problems of warfare is how to feed the vast masses which its operations require ; and hence it is commonly said, that a well-managed commissariat is a chief condition of victory. Few

people can fight without eating ;—Englishmen as little as any. I have heard of a work of a foreign officer, who took a survey of the European armies previously to the revolutionary war ; in which he praised our troops highly, but said they would not be effective till they were supported by a better commissariat. Moreover, one commonly hears, that the supply of this deficiency is one of the very merits of the great Duke of Wellington. So it is with civilized races ; but the Tartars, as is evident from what I have already observed, have in their wars no need of any commissariat at all ; and that, not merely from the unscrupulousness of their foraging, but because they find in the instruments of their conquests the staple of their food. “ Corn is a bulky and perishable commodity,” says an historian ; “ and the large magazines, which are indispensably necessary for the subsistence of civilized troops, are difficult and slow of transport.” But, not to say that even their flocks and herds were fitted for rapid movement, like the nimble sheep of Wales and the wild cattle of North Britain, the Tartars could even dispense with these altogether. If straitened for provisions, they ate the chargers which carried them to battle ; indeed they seemed to account their flesh a delicacy, above the reach of



the poor, and in consequence were enjoying a banquet in circumstances when civilised troops would be staving off starvation. And with a view to such accidents, they have been accustomed to carry with them in their expeditions a number of supernumerary horses, which they might either ride or eat, according to the occasion. It was an additional advantage to them in their warlike movements, that they were little particular whether their food had been killed for the purpose, or had died of disease. Nor is this all: their horses' hides were made into tents and clothing, perhaps into bottles and coracles; and their intestines into bowstrings.

Trained then, as they are, to habits which in themselves invite to war, the inclemency of their native climate has been a constant motive for them to seek out settlements and places of sojournment elsewhere. The spacious plains, over which they roam, are either monotonous grazing lands, or inhospitable deserts relieved with green valleys or recesses. The cold is intense in a degree of which we have no experience in England, though we lie to the north of them. This arises in a measure from their distance from the sea, and again from their elevation of level, and further from the saltpetre with which their soil or their



atmosphere is impregnated. The sole influence then of their fatherland, if I may apply to it such a term, is to drive its inhabitants from it to the West or to the South.

4

I have said that the geographical features of their country carry them forward in those two directions, the South and the West ; not to say that the ocean forbids them going eastward, and the North does but hold out to them a climate more inclement than their own. Leaving the district of Mongolia in the furthermost East, high above the north of China, and passing through the long and broad valleys which I spoke of just now, the emigrants at length would arrive at the edge of that elevated plateau, which constitutes Tartary proper. They would pass over the high region of Pamir, where are the sources of the Oxus, they would descend the terrace of the Bolor, and the steps of Badakshan, and gradually reach a vast region, flat on the whole as the expanse they had left, but as strangely depressed below the level of the sea, as Tartary is lifted above it. This is the country, forming the two basins of the Aral and the Caspian, which terminates the immense Asiatic



plain, and may be vaguely designated by the name of Turkistan. Hitherto the necessity of their route would force them on, in one multitudinous emigration, but now they may diverge, and have diverged. If they were to cross the Jaxartes and the Oxus, and then to proceed southward, they would come to Khorasan, the ancient Bactriana, and so to Afghanistan and to Hindostan on the east, or to Persia on the west. But if, instead, they continued their westward course, then they would skirt the north coast of the Aral and the Caspian, cross the Volga, and there would have a second opportunity, if they chose to avail themselves of it, of descending southwards, by Georgia and Armenia, either to Syria or to Asia Minor. Refusing this diversion, and persevering onwards to the west, at length they would pass the Don, and descend upon Europe across the Ukraine, Bessarabia, and the Danube.

Such are the three routes,—across the Oxus, across the Caucasus, and across the Danube,—which the pastoral nations have variously pursued at various times, when their roving habits, their warlike propensities, and their discomforts at home, have combined to precipitate them on the industry, the civilization, and the luxury of the West and of the South. And at such times, as

might be inferred from what has been already said, their invasions have been rather irruptions, inroads, or, what are called, raids, than a proper conquest and occupation of the countries which have been their victims. They would go forward, 200,000 of them at once, at the rate of 100 miles a day, swimming the rivers, galloping over the plains, intoxicated with the excitement of air and speed, as if it were a fox-chase, or full of pride and fury at the reverses which set them in motion; seeking indeed their fortunes, but seeking them on no plan; like a flight of locusts, or a swarm of angry wasps smoked out of their nest. They would seek for immediate gratification, and let the future take its course. They would be bloodthirsty and rapacious, and would inflict ruin and misery to any extent; and they would do tenfold more harm to the invaded, than benefit to themselves. They would be powerful to break down; helpless to build up. They would in a day undo the labour and skill, the prosperity of years; but they would not know how to construct a polity, how to conduct a government, how to organize a system of slavery, or to digest a code of laws. Rather they would despise the sciences of politics, law, and finance; and, if they honoured any profession or vocation, it would



be such as bore immediately and personally on themselves. Thus we find them treating the priest and the physician with respect, when they found such among their captives; but they could not endure the presence of a lawyer. How could it be otherwise with those who may be called the outlaws of the human race ? They did but justify the seeming paradox of the traveller's exclamation, who, when at length, after a dreary passage through the wilderness, he came in sight of a gibbet, returned thanks that he had now arrived at a civilized country. "The pastoral tribes," says the writer I have already quoted, "who were ignorant of the distinction of landed property, must have disregarded the use, as well as the abuse, of civil jurisprudence ; and the skill of an eloquent lawyer would excite only their contempt or their abhorrence." And he refers to an outrage on the part of a barbarian of the North, who, not satisfied with cutting out a lawyer's tongue, sewed up his mouth, in order, as he said, that the viper might no longer hiss. The well-known story of the Czar Peter, himself a Tartar, is here in point. When told there were some thousands of lawyers at Westminster, he is said to have observed that there had been only two in his own dominions, and he had hung one of them.



Now I have thrown the various inhabitants of the Asiatic plain together, under one description, not as if I overlooked or undervalued the distinction of races, but because I have no intention of committing myself to any statements on so intricate and interminable a subject as ethnology. In spite of the controversy about skulls, and skins, and languages, by means of which man is to be traced up to his primitive condition, I consider place and climate to be a sufficiently real aspect under which he may be regarded, and with this I shall content myself. I am speaking of the inhabitants of those extended plains, whether Scythians, Massagetae, Sarmatians, Huns, Moguls, Tartars, Turks, or anything else; and whether or no any of them or all of them are identical with each other in their pedigree and antiquities. Position and climate create habits; and, since the country is called Tartary, I shall call them Tartar habits, and the populations which have inhabited it and exhibited them, Tartars, for convenience' sake, whatever be their family descent. From the circumstances of their situation, these populations have in all ages been shepherds, mounted on horseback, roaming



through trackless spaces, easily incited to war, easily formed into masses, easily dissolved again into their component parts, suddenly sweeping across continents, suddenly descending on the south or west, suddenly extinguishing the civilization of ages, suddenly forming empires, suddenly vanishing, no one knows how, into their native north.

Such is the fearful provision for havoc and devastation, when the Divine Word goes forth for judgment upon the civilized world, which the North has ever had in store; and the regions on which it has principally expended its fury, are those, whose fatal beauty, or richness of soil, or perfection of cultivation, or exquisiteness of produce, or amenity of climate, makes them objects of desire to the barbarian. Such are China, Hindostan, Persia, Syria, and Anatolia or the Levant, in Asia; Greece, Italy, Sicily, and Spain, in Europe; and the northern coast of Africa.

These regions, on the contrary, have neither the inducement nor the means to retaliate upon their ferocious invaders. The relative position of the combatants must always be the same, while the combat lasts. The South has nothing to win, the North nothing to lose; the North nothing to offer, the South nothing to covet. Nor is this all: the North as in

an impregnable fortress, defies the attack of the South. Immense trackless solitudes ; no cities, no tillage, no roads ; deserts, forests, marshes ; bleak table-lands, snowy mountains ; unlocated, flitting, receding populations ; no capitals, or marts, or strong places, or fruitful vales, to hold as hostages for submission ; fearful winters and many months of them ;—nature herself fights and conquers for the barbarian. What madness shall tempt the South to undergo extreme risks without the prospect or chance of a return ? True it is, ambition, whose very life is a fever, has now and then ventured on the reckless expedition ; but from the first page of history to the last, from Cyrus to Napoleon, what has the Northern war done for the greatest warriors but destroy the flower of their armies and the *prestige* of their name ? Our maps, in placing the North at the top, and the South at the bottom of the sheet, impress us, by what may seem a sophistical analogy, with the imagination that Huns or Moguls, Kalmucks or Cossacks, have been a superincumbent mass, descending by a sort of gravitation upon the fair territories which lie below them. Yet this is substantially true ;—though the attraction towards the South is of a moral, not of a physical nature, yet an attraction there is, and a huge conglomeration of destructive



elements hangs over us, and from time to time rushes down with an awful irresistible momentum. Barbarism is ever impending over the civilized world. Never, since history began, has there been so long a cessation of this law of human society, as in the period in which we live. The descent of the Turks on Europe was the last instance of it, and that was completed four hundred years ago. They are now themselves in the position of those races, whom they themselves formerly came down upon.

6

As to the instances of this conflict between North and South in the times before the Christian era, we know more of them from antiquarian research than from history. The principal of those which ancient writers have recorded are contained in the history of the Persian Empire. The wandering Tartar tribes went at that time by the name of Scythians, and had possession of the plains of Europe as well as of Asia. Central Europe was not at that time the seat of civilized nations ; but from the Chinese Sea even to the Rhine or Bay of Biscay, a course of many thousand miles, the barbarian emigrant might wander on, as necessity or caprice impelled him. Darius



assailed the Scythians of Europe ; Cyrus, his predecessor, the Scythians of Asia.

As to Cyrus, writers are not concordant on the subject, but the celebrated Greek historian, Herodotus, whose accuracy of research is generally confessed, makes the great desert, which had already been fatal, according to some accounts, to the Assyrian Semiramis, the ruin also of the founder of the Persian Empire. He tells us that Cyrus led an army against the Scythian tribes (Massagetae, as they were called), who were stationed to the east of the Caspian ; and that they, on finding him prepared to cross the river which bounded their country to the South, sent him a message which well illustrates the hopelessness of going to war with them. They are said to have given him his choice of fighting them either three days' march within their own territory, or three days' march within his ; it being the same to them whether he made himself a grave in their inhospitable deserts, or they a home in his flourishing provinces. He had with him in his army a celebrated captive, the Lydian King Croesus, who had once been head of a wealthy empire, till he had succumbed to the fortunes of a more illustrious conqueror ; and on this occasion he availed himself of his advice. Croesus cautioned him



against admitting the barbarians within the Persian border, and counselled him to accept their permission of his advancing into their territory, and then to have recourse to stratagem. "As I hear," he says in the simple style of the historian, which will not bear translation, "the Massagetae have no experience of the good things of life. Spare not then to serve up many sheep, and add thereunto stoups of neat wine, and all sorts of viands. Set out this banquet for them in our camp, leave the refuse of the army there, and retreat with the body of your troops upon the river. If I am not mistaken, the Scythians will address themselves to all this good cheer, as soon as they fall in with it, and then we shall have the opportunity of a brilliant exploit." I need not pursue the history further than to state the issue. In spite of the immediate success of his *ruse de guerre*, Cyrus was eventually defeated, and lost both his army and his life. The Scythian Queen Tomyris, in revenge for the lives which he had sacrificed to his ambition, is related to have cut off his head and plunged it into a vessel filled with blood, saying, "Cyrus, drink your fill." Such is the account given us by Herodotus ; and, even if it is to be rejected, it serves to illustrate the difficulties of an invasion of Scythia ; for legends.

must be framed according to the circumstances of the case, and grow out of probabilities, if they are to gain credit, and if they have actually succeeded in gaining it.

7

Our knowledge of the expedition of Darius in the next generation, is more certain. This fortunate monarch, after many successes, even on the European side of the Bosphorus, impelled by that ambition, which holy Daniel had already seen in prophecy to threaten West and North as well as South, towards the end of his life directed his arms against the Scythians who inhabited the country now called the Ukraine. His pretext for this expedition was an incursion which the same barbarians had made into Asia, shortly before the time of Cyrus. They had crossed the Don, just above the Sea of Azoff, had entered the country now called Circassia, had threaded the defiles of the Caucasus, and had defeated the Median King Cyaxares, the grandfather of Cyrus. Then they overran Armenia, Cappadocia, Pontus, and part of Lydia, that is, a great portion of Anatolia or Asia Minor ; and managed to establish themselves in the country for twenty-eight years, living by plunder and exaction. In the course of this



period, they descended into Syria, as far as to the very borders of Egypt. The Egyptians bought them off, and they turned back ; however, they possessed themselves of a portion of Palestine, and gave their name to one town, Scythopolis, in the territory of Manasses. This was in the last days of the Jewish monarchy, shortly before the captivity. At length Cyaxares got rid of them by treachery ; he invited the greater number of them to a banquet, intoxicated, and massacred them. Nor was this the termination of the troubles, of which they were the authors ; and I mention the sequel, because both the office which they undertook and their manner of discharging it, their insubordination and their cruelty, are an anticipation of some passages in the early history of the Turks. The Median King had taken some of them into his pay, made them his huntsmen, and submitted certain noble youths to their training. Justly or unjustly they happened one day to be punished for leaving the royal table without its due supply of game : without more ado, the savages in revenge murdered and served up one of these youths instead of the venison which had been expected of them, and made forthwith for the neighbouring kingdom of Lydia. A war between the two states was the consequence.



But to return to Darius :—it is said to have been in retaliation for these excesses that he resolved on his expedition against the Scythians, who, as I have mentioned, were in occupation of the district between the Danube and the Don. For this purpose he advanced from Susa in the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf, through Assyria and Asia Minor to the Bosphorus, just opposite to the present site of Constantinople, where he crossed over into Europe. Thence he made his way, with the incredible number of 700,000 men, horse and foot, to the Danube, reducing Thrace, the present Roumelia, in his way. When he had crossed that stream, he was at once in Scythia ; but the Scythians had adopted the same sort of strategy, which in the beginning of the century was practised by their successors against Napoleon. They cut and carried off the green crops, stopped up their wells or spoilt their water, and sent off their families and flocks to places of safety. Then they stationed their outposts just a day's journey before the enemy, to entice him on. He pursued them, they retreated ; and at length he found himself on the Don, the further boundary of the Scythian territory. They crossed the Don, and he crossed it too, into desolate and unknown



wilds ; then, eluding him altogether, from their own knowledge of the country, they made a circuit, and got back into their own land again.

Darius found himself outwitted, and came to a halt : how he had victualled his army, whatever deduction we make for its numbers, does not appear ; but it is plain that the time must come, when he could not proceed. He gave the order for retreat. Meanwhile, he found an opportunity of sending a message to the Scythian chief, and it was to this effect :—“Perverse man, take your choice ; fight me or yield.” The Scythians intended to do neither, but contrived, as before, to harass the Persian retreat. At length an answer came ; not a message, but an ominous gift ; they sent Darius a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows ; without a word of explanation. Darius himself at first hailed it as an intimation of submission ; in Greece to offer earth and water was the sign of capitulation, as, in a sale of land in our own countary, a clod from the soil still passes, or passed lately, from seller to purchaser, as a symbol of the transfer of possession. The Persian king, then, discerned in these singular presents a similar surrender of territorial jurisdiction. But another version, less favourable to his vanity and his hopes, was suggested by



one of his courtiers, and it ran thus : "Unless you can fly like a bird, or burrow like a mouse, or swim the marshes like a frog, you cannot escape our arrows." Whichever interpretation was a true one, it needed no message from the enemy to inflict upon Darius the presence of the dilemma suggested in this unpleasant interpretation. He yielded to imperative necessity, and hastened his escape from the formidable situation in which he had placed himself, and through great good fortune succeeded in effecting it. He crossed the sea just in time ; for the Scythians came down in pursuit, as far as the coast, and returned home laden with booty.

This is pretty much all that is definitely recorded in history of the ancient Tartars. Alexander, in a later age, came into conflict with them in the region called Sogdiana which lies at the foot of that high plateau of central and eastern Asia, which I have designated as their proper home. But he was too prudent to be entangled in extended expeditions against them, and having made trial of their formidable strength, and made some demonstrations of the superiority of his own, he left them in possession of their wildernesses.

John Henry Newman.



GEORGE THE THIRD

We have to glance over sixty years in as many minutes. To read the mere catalogue of characters who figured during that long period, would occupy our allotted time, and we should have all text and no sermon. England has to undergo the revolt of the American colonies ; to submit to defeat and separation ; to shake under the volcano of the French Revolution ; to grapple and fight for the life with her gigantic enemy Napoleon ; to gasp and rally after that tremendous struggle. The old society, with its courtly splendours, has to pass away ; generations of statesmen to rise and disappear ; Pitt to follow Chatham to the tomb ; the memory of Rodney and Wolfe to be superseded by Nelson's and Wellington's glory ; the old poets who unite us to Queen Anne's time to sink into their graves ; Johnson to die, and Scott and Byron to arise ; Garrick to delight the world with his dazzling dramatic genius, and Kean to leap on the stage and take possession of the astonished theatre. Steam has to be invented ; kings to be beheaded, banished, deposed, restored ; Napoleon to be but

an episode, and George III is to be alive through all these varied changes, to accompany his people through all these revolutions of thought, government, society ; to survive out of the old world into ours.

When I first saw England, she was in mourning for the young Princess Charlotte, the hope of the empire. I came from India as a child, and our ship touched at an island on the way home, where my black servant took me a long walk over rocks and hills until we reached a garden, where we saw a man walking. "That is he," said the black man : "that is Bonaparte! He eats three sheep every day, and all the little children he can lay hands on!" There were people in the British dominions besides that poor Calcutta serving-man, with an equal horror of the Corsican ogre.

With the same childish attendant, I remember peeping through the colonnade at Carlton House, and seeing the abode of the great Prince Regent. I can see yet the Guards pacing before the gates of the place. The place ! What place ? The palace exists no more than the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. It is but a name now. Where be the sentries who used to salute as the Royal chariots drove in and out ? The chariots, with the kings inside, have driven to the realms of



Pluto ; the tall Guards have marched into darkness, and the echoes of their drums are rolling in Hades. Where the palace once stood, a hundred little children are paddling up and down the steps to St. James's Park. A score of grave gentlemen are taking their tea at the "Athenæum Club ;" as many grisly warriors are garrisoning the "United Service Club" opposite. Pall Mall is the great social Exchange of London now—the mart of news, of politics, of scandal, of rumour—the English forum, so to speak, where men discuss the last despatch from the Crimea, the last speech of Lord Derby, the next move of Lord John.

I fancy that peculiar product of the past, the fine gentleman, has almost vanished off the face of the earth, and is disappearing like the beaver or the Red Indian. We can't have fine gentlemen any more, because we can't have the society in which they lived. The people will not obey : the parasites will not be as obsequious as formerly : children do not go down on their knees to beg their parents' blessing : chaplains do not say grace and retire before the pudding : servants do not say "your honour" and "your worship" at every moment : tradesmen do not stand hat in hand as the gentleman passes : authors do not wait for hours in gentlemen's anterooms with a

fulsome dedication, for which they hope to get five guineas from his lordship. In the days when there were fine gentlemen, Mr. Secretary Pitt's under-secretaries did not dare to sit down before him ; but Mr. Pitt, in his turn, went down on his gouty knees to George II ; and when George III spoke a few kind words to him, Lord Chatham burst into tears of reverential joy and gratitude ; so awful was the idea of the monarch, and so great the distinctions of rank. Fancy Lord John Russell or Lord Palmerston on their knees whilst the Sovereign was reading a despatch, or beginning to cry because Prince Albert said something civil !

At the accession of George III, the patricians were yet at the height of their good fortune. Society recognised their superiority; which they themselves pretty calmly took for granted. They inherited not only titles and estates, and seats in the house of Peers, but seats in the House of Commons. There were a multitude of Government places, and not merely these, but bribes of actual 500*l.* notes, which members of the House took not much shame in receiving. Fox went into Parliament at 20: Pitt when just of age: his father when not much older. It was the good time for Patricians. Small blame to them if



they took and enjoyed, and over-enjoyed, the prizes of politics, the pleasures of social life.

If, in looking at the lives of princes, courtiers, men of rank and fashion, we must perforce depict them as idle, profligate, and criminal, we must make allowances for the rich man's failings, and recollect that we, too, were very likely indolent and voluptuous, had we no motive for work, a mortal's natural taste for pleasure, and the daily temptation of a large income. What could a great peer, with a great castle and park, and a great fortune, do but be splendid and idle? In these letters of Lord Carlisle's, from which I have been quoting, there is many a just complaint made by the kind-hearted young nobleman of the state which he is obliged to keep; the magnificence in which he must live; the idleness to which his position as a peer of England bound him. Better for him had he been a lawyer at his desk, or a clerk in his office;—a thousand times better chance for happiness, education, employment, security from temptation. A few years since the profession of arms was the only one which our nobles could follow. The church, the bar, medicine, literature, the arts, commerce, were below them. It is to the middle class we must look for the safety of England: the working educated men,

away from Lord North's bribery in the senate; the good clergy not corrupted into parasites by hopes of preferment; the tradesmen rising into manly opulence; the painters pursuing their gentle calling; the men of letters in their quiet studies; these are the men whom we love and like to read of in the last age. How small the grandees and the men of pleasure look beside them! how contemptible the stories of the George III court squabbles are beside the recorded talk of dear old Johnson! What is the grandest entertainment at Windsor compared to a night at the club over its modest cups, with Percy and Langton and Goldsmith and poor Bozzy at the table? I declare I think, of all the polite men of that age, Joshua Reynolds was the finest gentleman. And they were good, as well as witty and wise, those dear old friends of the past. Their minds were not debauched by excess, or effeminate with luxury. They toiled their noble day's labour: they rested, and took their kindly pleasure: they cheered their holiday meetings with generous wit and hearty interchange of thought: they were no prudes, but no blush need follow their conversation: they were merry, but no riot came out of their cups. Ah! I would have liked a night at the "Turk's Head," even though bad news had arrived from



the colonies, and Doctor Johnson was growling against the rebels ; to have sat with him and Goldy ; and to have heard Burke, the finest talker in the world ; and to have had Garrick flashing in with a story from his theatre ! —I like, I say, to think of that society ; and not merely how pleasant and how wise, but how *good* they were. I think it was on going home one night from the club that Edmund Burke—his noble soul full of great thoughts, be sure, for they never left him ; his heart full of gentleness—was accosted by a poor wandering woman, to whom he spoke words of kindness ; and moved by the tears of this Magdalen, perhaps having caused them by the good words he spoke to her, he took her home to the house of his wife and children, and never left her until he had found the means of restoring her to honesty and labour. O you fine gentlemen ! you Marches, and Selwyns, and Chesterfields, how small you look by the side of these great men !

I hold old Johnson (and shall we not pardon James Boswell some errors for embalming him for us ?) to be the great supporter of the British monarchy and church during the last age—better than whole benches of bishops, better than Pitts, Norths, and the great Burke himself. Johnson

had the ear of the nation: his immense authority reconciled it to loyalty, and shamed it out of irreligion. When George III talked with him, and the people heard the great author's good opinion of the sovereign, whole generations rallied to the King. Johnson was revered as a sort of oracle; and the oracle declared for church and king. What a humanity the old man had! He was a kindly partaker of all honest pleasures: a fierce foe to all sin, but a gentle enemy to all sinners. "What, boys, are you for a frolic?" he cries, when Topham Beauclerc comes and wakes him up at midnight: "I'm with you." And away he goes, tumbles on his homely old clothes, and trundles through Covent Garden with the young fellows. When he used to frequent Garrick's theatre, and had "the liberty of the scenes," he says, "All the actresses knew me, and dropped me a courtesy as they passed to the stage." That would make a pretty picture: it is a pretty picture in my mind, of youth, folly, gaiety, tenderly surveyed by wisdom's merciful, pure eyes.

George III and his Queen lived in a very unpretending but elegant-looking house, on the site of the hideous pile under which his granddaughter at present reposes. The King's mother



inhabited Carlton House, which contemporary prints represent with a perfect paradise of a garden, with trim lawns, green arcades, and vistas of classic statues. She admired these in company with my Lord Bute, who had a fine classic taste, and sometimes counsel took and sometimes tea in the pleasant green arbours along with that polite nobleman. Bute was hated with a rage of which there have been few examples in English history. He was the butt for everybody's abuse; for Wilkes's devilish mischief; for Churchill's slashing satire; for the hooting of the mob that roasted the boot, his emblem, in a thousand bonfires; that hated him because he was a favourite and a Scotchman, calling him "Mortimer," "Lothario," I know not what names, and accusing his royal mistress of all sorts of crimes—the grave, lean, demure elderly woman, who, I dare say, was quite as good as her neighbours. Chatham lent the aid of his great malice to influence the popular sentiment against her. He assailed, in the House of Lords, the "secret influence, more mighty than the throne itself, which betrayed and clogged every administration." The most furious pamphlets echoed the cry. "Impeach the King's mother," was scribbled over every wall at the Court end of the town, Walpole

tells us. What had she done ? What had Frederick, Prince of Wales, George's father, done, that he was so loathed by George II and never mentioned by George III ? Let us not seek for stones to batter that forgotten grave, but acquiesce in the contemporary epitaph over him :—

“ Here lies Fred,
Who was alive, and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather.
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another.
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her.
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation.
But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive, and is dead
There's no more to be said.”

The widow with eight children round her, prudently reconciled herself with the King, and won the old man's confidence and goodwill. A shrewd, hard, domineering, narrow-minded woman, she educated her children according to her lights, and spoke of the eldest as a dull, good boy ; she kept him very close : she held the tightest rein over him : she had curious prejudices and bigotries.



His uncle, the burly Cumberland, taking down a sabre once, and drawing it to amuse the child—the boy started back and turned pale. The Prince felt a generous shock: “What must they have told him about me ?” he asked.

His mother’s bigotry and hatred he inherited with the courageous obstinacy of his own race; but he was a firm believer where his fathers had been free thinkers, and a true and fond supporter of the Church, of which he was the titular defender. Like other dull men, the King was all his life suspicious of superior people. He did not like Fox ; he did not like Reynolds ; he did not like Nelson, Chatham, Burke ; he was testy at the idea of all innovations, and suspicious of all innovators. He loved mediocrities ; Benjamin West was his favourite painter ; Beattie was his poet. The King lamented, not without pathos, in his after-life, that his education had been neglected. He was a dull lad brought up by narrow-minded people. The cleverest tutors in the world could have done little probably to expand that small intellect, though they might have improved his tastes, and taught his perceptions some generosity.

But he admired as well as he could. There is little doubt that a letter, written by the little

Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz,—a letter containing the most feeble commonplaces about the horrors of war, and the most trivial remarks on the blessings of peace, struck the young monarch greatly, and decided him upon selecting the young Princess as the sharer of his throne.

They say the little Princess who had written the fine letter about the horrors of war—a beautiful letter without a single blot, for which she was to be rewarded, like the heroine of the old spelling book story—was at play one day with some of her young companions in the gardens of Strelitz, and that the young ladies' conversation was, strange to say, about husbands. “Who will take such a poor little Princess as me?” Charlotte said to her friend, Ida von Bulow, and at that very moment the postman's horn sounded, and Ida said, “Princess! there is the sweetheart.” As she said, so it actually turned out. The postman brought letters from the splendid young King of England, who said, “Princess! because you have written such a beautiful letter, which does credit to your head and heart, come and be queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, and the true wife of your most obedient servant, George.” So she jumped for joy; and went upstairs and



packed all her little trunks ; and set off straight-way for her kingdom in a beautiful yacht, with a harpsichord on board for her to play upon, and around her a beautiful fleet, all covered with flags and streamers.

They met, and they were married, and for years they led the happiest, simplest lives sure ever led by married couple. It is said the King winced when he first saw his homely little bride ; but, however that may be, he was a true and faithful husband to her, as she was a faithful and loving wife. They had the simplest pleasures—the very mildest and simplest—little country dances, to which a dozen couple were invited, and where the honest King would stand up and dance for three hours at a time to one tune ; after which delicious excitement they would go to bed without any supper (the Court people grumbling sadly at that absence of supper), and get up quite early the next morning, and perhaps the next night have another dance ; or the Queen would play on the spinet—she played pretty well, Haydn said—or the King would read to her a paper out of the *Spectator*, or perhaps one of Ogden's sermons. O Arcadia ! what a life it must have been ! There used to be Sunday drawing-rooms at Court ; but the young King stopped these, as he stopped

all that godless gambling whereof we have made mention. Not that George was averse to any innocent pleasures, or pleasures which he thought innocent. He was a patron of the arts, after his fashion ; kind and gracious to the artists whom he favoured, and respectful to their calling. He wanted once to establish an Order of Minerva for literary and scientific characters ; the knights were to take rank after the knights of the Bath, and to sport a straw-coloured ribbon and a star of sixteen points. But there was such a row amongst the *literati* as to the persons who should be appointed, that the plan was given up, and Minerva and her star never came down amongst us.

There is something to me exceedingly touching in that simple early life of the King's. As long as his mother lived—a dozen years after his marriage with the little spinet-player—he was a great, shy, awkward boy, under the tutelage of that hard parent. She must have been a clever, domineering, cruel woman. She kept her household lonely and in gloom, mistrusting almost all people who came about her children. Seeing the young Duke of Gloucester silent and unhappy once, she sharply asked him the cause of his silence. "I am thinking," said the poor child.



"Thinking, sir ! and of what ?" "I am thinking if ever I have a son I will not make him so unhappy as you make me." The other sons were all wild except George. Dutifully every evening George and Charlotte paid their visit to the King's mother at Carlton House. She had a throat-complaint, of which she died ; but to the last persisted in driving about the streets to show she was alive. The night before her death the resolute woman talked with her son and daughter-in-law as usual, went to bed, and was found dead there in the morning. "George, be a king !" were the words which she was for ever croaking in the ears of her son : and a king the simple, stubborn, affectionate, bigoted man tried to be.

He did his best ; he worked according to his lights ; what virtue he knew, he tried to practise ; what knowledge he could master, he strove to acquire. He was for ever drawing maps, for example, and learned geography with no small care and industry. But, as one thinks of an office, almost divine, performed by any mortal man—of any single being pretending to control the thoughts, to direct the faith, to order the implicit obedience of brother millions, to compel them into war at his offence or quarrel ; to command, "In this way you shall trade, in this way you

shall think ; these neighbours shall be your allies whom you shall help, these others your enemies whom you shall slay at my orders ; in this way you shall worship God ;"—who can wonder that, when such a man as George took such an office on himself, punishment and humiliation should fall upon people and chief ?

Yet there is something grand about his courage. The battle of the King with his aristocracy remains yet to be told by the historian who shall view the reign of George more justly than the trumpery panegyrists who wrote immediately after his decease. It was he, with the people to back him, who made the war with America ; it was he and the people who refused justice to the Roman Catholics ; and on both questions he beat the patricians. He bribed : he bullied : he darkly dissembled on occasion : he exercised a slippery perseverance, and a vindictive resolution, which one almost admires as one thinks his character over. His courage was never to be beat. It trampled North under foot : it beat the stiff neck of the younger Pitt : even his illness never conquered that indomitable spirit. As soon as his brain was clear, it resumed the scheme, only laid aside when his reason left him : as soon as his hands were out of the strait-waistcoat,



they took up the pen and the plan which had engaged him up to the moment of his malady. I believe it is by persons believing themselves in the right that nine-tenths of the tyranny of this world has been perpetrated. Arguing on that convenient premise, the Dey of Algiers would cut off twenty heads of a morning ; Father Dominic would burn a score of Jews in the presence of the most Catholic King, and the Archbishops of Toledo and Salamanca sing Amen. Protestants were roasted, Jesuits hung and quartered at Smithfield, and witches burned at Salem, and all by worthy people, who believed they had the best authority for their actions.

And so, with respect to old George, even Americans, whom he hated, and who conquered him, may give him credit for having quite honest reasons for oppressing them. Appended to Lord Brougham's biographical sketch of Lord North, are some autograph notes of the King, which let us most curiously into the state of his mind. "The times certainly require," says he, "the concurrence of all who wish to prevent anarchy. I have no wish but the prosperity of my own dominions, therefore I must look upon all who would not heartily assist me as bad men, as well as bad subjects." That is the way he

reasoned. "I wish nothing but good, therefore every man who does not agree with me is a traitor and a scoundrel." Remember that he believed himself anointed by a Divine commission ; remember that he was a man of slow parts and imperfect education ; that the same awful will of heaven which placed a crown upon his head, which made him tender to his family, pure in his life, courageous and honest, made him dull of comprehension, obstinate of will, and at many times deprived him of reason. He was the father of his people ; his rebellious children must be flogged into obedience. He was the defender of the Protestant faith ; he would rather lay that stout head upon the block than that Catholics should have a share in the government of England. And you do not suppose that there are not honest bigots enough in all countries to back kings in this kind of statesmanship ? Without doubt the American war was popular in England. In 1775 the address in favour of coercing the colonies was carried by 304 to 105 in the Commons, by 104 to 29 in the House of Lords. Popular ?—so was the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes popular in France : so was the massacre of St. Bartholomew : so was the Inquisition exceedingly popular in Spain.



King George's household was a model of an English gentleman's household. It was early ; it was kindly ; it was charitable ; it was frugal ; it was orderly ; it must have been stupid to a degree which I shudder now to contemplate. No wonder all the princes ran away from the lap of that dreary domestic virtue. It always rose, rode, dined at stated intervals. Day after day was the same. At the same hour at night the King kissed his daughters' jolly cheeks ; the Princesses kissed their mother's hand ; and Madame Thielke brought the royal nightcap. At the same hour the equerries and women in waiting had their little dinner, and cackled over their tea. The King had his backgammon or his evening concert ; the equerries yawned themselves to death in the anteroom ; or the King and his family walked on Windsor slopes, the King holding his darling little Princess Amelia by the hand ; and the people crowded round quite good-naturedly ; and the Eton boys thrust their chubby cheeks under the crowd's elbows ; and the concert over, the King never failed to take his enormous cocked-hat off, and salute his band, and say, "Thank you, gentlemen."

A quieter household, a more prosaic life than this of Kew or Windsor, cannot be imagined.

Rain or shine, the King rode every day for hours, poked his red face into hundreds of cottages round about, and showed that shovel-hat and Windsor uniform to farmers, to pig-boys, to old women making apple dumplings ; to all sorts of people, gentle and simple, about whom countless stories are told. Nothing can be more undignified than these stories. When Haroun Alraschid visits a subject incog., the latter is sure to be very much the better for the caliph's magnificence. Old George showed no such royal splendour. He used to give a guinea sometimes : sometimes feel in his pockets and find he had no money : often ask a man a hundred questions : about the number of his family, about his oats and beans, about the rent he paid for his house, and ride on. On one occasion he played the part of King Alfred, and turned a piece of meat with a string at a cottager's house. When the old woman came home, she found a paper with an enclosure of money, and a note written by the royal pencil : " Five guineas to buy a jack." It was not splendid, but it was kind and worthy of Farmer George. One day, when the King and Queen were walking together, they met a little boy—they were always fond of children, the good folks—and patted the little white head. " Whose



little boy are you ? " asks the Windsor uniform. " I am the King's beefeater's little boy," replied the child. On which the King said, " Then kneel down, and kiss the Queen's hand." But the innocent offspring of the beefeater declined this treat. " No," said he, " I won't kneel, for if I do, I shall spoil my new breeches." The thrifty King ought to have hugged him and knighted him on the spot. George's admirers wrote pages and pages of such stories about him. One morning, before anybody else was up, the King walked about Gloucester town ; pushed over Molly the housemaid with her pail, who was scrubbing the doorsteps ; ran upstairs and woke all the equerries in their bed rooms ; and then trotted down to the bridge, where, by this time, a dozen of louts were assembled. " What ! is this Gloucester New Bridge ?" asked our gracious monarch ; and the people answered him, " Yes, your Majesty!" " Why, then, my boys," said he, " let us have a huzzay !" After giving them which intellectual gratification, he went home to breakfast. Our fathers read these simple tales with fond pleasure ; laughed at these very small jokes ; liked the old man who poked his nose into every cottage ; who lived on plain wholesome roast and boiled ; who despised your

French kickshaws ; who was a true hearty old English gentleman. You may have seen Gilray's famous print of him—in the old wig, in the stout old hideous Windsor uniform—as the King of Brobdingnag, peering at a little Gulliver, whom he holds up in his hand, whilst in the other he has an opera-glass, through which he surveys the pigmy ? Our fathers chose to set up George as the type of a great king ; and the little Gulliver was the great Napoleon. We prided ourselves on our prejudices ; we blustered and bragged with absurd vainglory ; we dealt to our enemy a monstrous injustice of contempt and scorn ; we fought him with all weapons, mean as well as heroic. There was no lie we would not believe ; no charge of crime which our furious prejudice would not credit. I thought at one time of making a collection of the lies which the French had written against us, and we had published against them during the war ; it would be a strange memorial of popular falsehood.

The Queen's character is represented in " Burney " at full length. She was a sensible, most decorous woman ; a very grand lady on state occasions, simple enough in ordinary life ; well read as times went, and giving shrewd opinions about books ; stingy, but not unjust ; not



generally unkind to her dependants, but invincible in her notions of etiquette, and quite angry if her people suffered ill-health in her service. She gave Miss Burney a shabby pittance and led the poor young woman a life which well-nigh killed her. She never thought but that she was doing Burney the greatest favour, in taking her from freedom, fame, and competence, and killing her off with languor in that dreary court. It was not dreary to her. Had she been servant instead of mistress, her spirit would never have broken down: she never would have put a pin out of place, or been a moment from her duty. *She* was not weak, and she could not pardon those who were. She was perfectly correct in life, and she hated poor sinners with a rancour such as virtue sometimes has. She must have had awful private trials of her own: not merely with her children, but with her husband in those long days about which nobody will ever know anything now; when he was not quite insane; when his incessant tongue was babbling folly, rage, persecution; and she had to smile and be respectful and attentive under this intolerable ennui. The Queen bore all her duties stoutly, as she expected others to bear them. At a State christening, the lady who held the infant was tired and looked unwell, and

the Princess of Wales asked permission for her to sit down. "Let her stand," said the Queen, flicking the snuff off her sleeve. *She* would have stood, the resolute old woman, if she had had to hold the child till his beard was grown. "I am seventy years of age," the Queen said, facing a mob of ruffians who stopped her sedan: "I have been fifty years Queen of England, and I never was insulted before." Fearless, rigid, unforgiving little queen ! I don't wonder that her sons revolted from her.

From November, 1810, George III ceased to reign. All the world knows the story of his malady: all history presents no sadder figure than that of the old man, blind and deprived of reason, wandering through the rooms of his palace addressing imaginary parliaments, reviewing fancied troops, holding ghostly courts. I have seen his picture as it was taken at this time, hanging in the apartment of his daughter, the Landgravine of Hesse Hombourg—amidst books and Windsor furniture, and a hundred fond reminiscences of her English home. The poor old father is represented in a purple gown, his snowy beard falling over his breast—the star of his famous Order still idly shining on it. He was not only sightless: he became utterly deaf. All



light, all reason, all sound of human voices, all the pleasures of this world of God, were taken from him. Some slight lucid moments he had ; in one of which, the Queen, desiring to see him, entered the room, and found him singing a hymn, and accompanying himself at the harpsichord. When he had finished, he knelt down and prayed aloud for her, and then for his family and then for the nation, concluding with a prayer for himself, that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity from him, but if not, to give him resignation to submit. He then burst into tears, and his reason again fled.

What preacher need moralize on this story ; what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it ? It is too terrible for tears. The thought of such a misery smites me down in submission before the Ruler of kings and men, the Monarch Supreme over empires and republics, the inscrutable Dispenser of life, death, happiness, victory. "O brothers," I said to those who heard me first in America—"O brothers ! speaking the same dear mother tongue—O comrades ! enemies no more, let us take a mournful hand together as we stand by this royal corpse, and call a truce to battle ! Low he lies to whom the proudest used to kneel once, and who was cast lower than the



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poorest dead, whom millions prayed for in vain.
Driven off his throne ; buffeted by rude hands ;
with his children in revolt ; the darling of his
old age killed before him untimely ; our Lear
hangs over her breathless lips and cries, ‘Cordelia,
Cordelia, stay a little !’

' Vex not his ghost—oh ! let him pass—he
hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer !'

Hush ! Strife and Quarrel, over the solemn grave ! Sound, trumpets, a mournful march. Fall dark curtain, upon his pageant, his pride, his grief, his awful tragedy."

William Makepeace Thackeray.



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Between Southampton and the Norman coast communications were easy and rapid ; and the account of the arrival of the censured bishops, with the indignant words which burst from the king at the unwelcome news which he heard from them for the first time, is an imperfect legend in which the transactions of many days must have been epitomized.

The bishops did not leave England till the 20th or 21st of December, and before their appearance the king must have heard already not only of the excommunications and of the daring misuse of his own name, but of the armed progress to London, of the remarkable demonstration there, of the archbishop's defiance of the government, of the mission of the Abbot of St. Albans, of the threats of the priest, and of the imminent danger of a general rebellion. During the first three weeks of this December many an anxious council must have been held in the Norman court, and many a scheme talked over and rejected for dealing with this impracticable firebrand. What could be done with him ?

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No remedy was now available but a violent one. The law could not restrain a man who claimed to be superior to law, and whose claims the nation was not prepared directly to deny. Three centuries later the solution would have been a formal trial, with the block and axe as the sequel of a judicial sentence. Ecclesiastical pretensions were still formidable under the Tudors, but the State had acquired strength to control them. In our own day the phantom has been exorcised altogether, and an archbishop who used Becket's language would be consigned to an asylum. In Becket's own time neither of these methods was possible. Becket himself could neither be borne with, consistently with the existence of the civil government, nor resisted save at a risk of censures which even the king scarcely dared to encounter. A bishop might have committed the seven deadly sins, but his word was still a spell which could close the gates of heaven. The allegiance of the people could not be depended upon for a day if Becket chose to declare the king excommunicated, unless the Pope should interfere: and the Pope was an inadequate resource in a struggle for the supremacy of the Church over the State. It was not until secular governments could look Popes and Bishops in the face, and



bid them curse till they were tired, that the relations of Church and State admitted of legal definition. Till that time should arrive the ecclesiastical theory was only made tolerable by submitting to the checks of tacit compromise and practical good sense.

Necessities for compromises of this kind exist at all times. In the most finished constitutions powers are assigned to the different branches of the state which it would be inconvenient or impossible to remove, yet which would cause an immediate catastrophe if the theory were made the measure of practice. The Crown retains prerogatives at present which would be fatal to it if strained. Parliament would make itself intolerable if it asserted the entire privileges which it legally possesses. The clergy in the twelfth century were allowed and believed to be ministers of God in a sense in which neither Crown nor baron dared appropriate the name to themselves. None the less the clergy could not be allowed to reduce Crown and barons into entire submission to their own pleasure. If either churchman or king broke the tacit bargain of mutual moderation which enabled them to work together harmoniously, the relations between the two orders might not admit of more satisfactory theoretic



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adjustment ; but there remained the resource to put out of the way the disturber of the peace.

Fuel ready to kindle was lying dry throughout Henry's dominions. If Becket was to be allowed to fling about excommunications at his own pleasure, to travel through the country attended by knights in arms, and surrounded by adoring fools who regarded him as a supernatural being, it was easy to foresee the immediate future of England and of half France. To persons, too, who knew the archbishop as well as Henry's court knew him, the character of the man himself who was causing so much anxiety must have been peculiarly irritating. Had Becket been an Anselm, he might have been credited with a desire to promote the interests of the Church, not for power's sake, but for the sake of those spiritual and moral influences which the Catholic Church was still able to exert, at least in some happy instances. But no such high ambition was to be traced either in Becket's agitation or in Becket's own disposition. He was still the self-willed, violent chancellor, with the dress of the saint upon him, but not the nature. His cause was not the mission of the Church to purify and elevate mankind, but the privilege of the Church to control the civil government, and to dictate the law in virtue of



magical powers which we now know to have been a dream and a delusion. His personal religion was not the religion of a regenerated heart, but the religion of self-torturing asceticism, a religion of the scourge and the hair shirt, a religion in which the evidences of grace were to be traced not in humbleness and truth, but in the worms and maggots which crawled about his body. He was the impersonation not of what was highest and best in the Catholic Church, but of what was falsest and worst. The fear which he inspired was not the reverence willingly offered to a superior nature, but a superstitious terror like that felt for witches and enchanters, which brave men at the call of a higher duty could dare to defy.

No one knows what passed at Bayeux during the first weeks of that December. King and council, knights and nobles, squires and valets must have talked of little else but Becket and his doing. The pages at Winchester laid their hands on their dagger-hilts when the priest delivered his haughty message. The peers and gentlemen who surrounded Henry at Bayeux are not likely to have felt more gently as each day brought news from England of some fresh audacity. At length, a few days before Christmas, the three bishops arrived.

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Two were under the curse, and could not be admitted into the king's presence. The Archbishop of York, being only suspended, carried less contamination with him. At a council the Archbishop was introduced, and produced Alexander's letters. From these it appeared not only that he and the other bishops were denounced by name, but that every person who had taken any part in the young king's coronation was by implication excommunicated also. It is to be remembered that the king had received a positive sanction for the coronation from Alexander ; that neither he nor the bishops had received the prohibition till the ceremony was over ; while there is reason to believe that the prohibitory letter, which the king might have respected, had been kept back by Becket himself.

The Archbishop of York still advised forbearance, and an appeal once more to Rome. The Pope would see at last what Becket really was, and would relieve the country of him. But an appeal to Rome would take time, and England meanwhile might be in flames. 'By God's eyes,' said the king, 'if all are excommunicated who were concerned in the coronation, I am excommunicated also.' Some one (the name of the speaker is not mentioned) said that there would



be no peace while Becket lived. With the fierce impatience of a man baffled by a problem which he has done his best to solve, and has failed through no fault of his own, Henry is reported to have exclaimed : ' Is this varlet that I loaded with kindness, that came first to court to me on a lame mule, to insult me and my children, and take my crown from me ? What cowards have I about me, that no one will deliver me from this lowborn priest ! ' It is very likely that Henry used such words. The greatest prince that ever sat on throne, if tried as Henry had been, would have said the same ; and Henry had used almost the same language to the bishops at Chinon in 1166. But it is evident that much is still untold. These passionate denunciations can have been no more than the outcome of long and ineffectual deliberation. Projects must have been talked over and rejected ; orders were certainly conceived which were to be sent to the archbishop, and measures were devised for dealing with him short of his death. He was to be required to absolve the censured bishops. If he refused, he might be sent in custody to the young king, he might be brought to Normandy, he might be exiled from the English dominions, or he might be imprisoned in some English castle. Indications can be traced



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of all these plans ; and something of the kind would probably have been resolved upon, although it must have been painfully clear also that, without the Pope's help, none of them would really meet the difficulty. But the result was that the king's friends, seeing their master's perplexity, determined to take the risk on themselves and deliver both him and their country. If the king acted, the king might be excommunicated, and the empire might be laid under interdict, with the consequences which every one foresaw. For their own acts the penalty would but fall upon themselves. They did not know, perhaps, distinctly what they meant to do, but something might have to be done which the king must condemn if they proposed it to him,

But being done unknown,
He would have found it afterwards well done.

Impetuous loyalty to the sovereign was in the spirit of the age.

Among the gentlemen about his person whom Henry had intended to employ, could he have resolved upon the instructions which were to be given to them, were four knights of high birth and large estate—Sir Reginald Fitzurse, of Somersetshire, a tenant in chief of the Crown, whom Becket



himself had originally introduced into the court ; Sir Hugh de Morville, custodian of Knaresborough Castle, and justiciary of Northumberland ; Sir William de Tracy, half a Saxon, with royal blood in him ; and Sir Richard le Breton, who had been moved to volunteer in the service by another instance of Becket's dangerous meddling. Le Breton was a friend of the king's brother William, whom the archbishop had separated from the lady to whom he was about to be married on some plea of consanguinity. Sir William de Mandeville and others were to have been joined in the commission. But these four chose to anticipate both their companions and their final orders, and started alone.* Their disappearance was observed. An express was sent to recall them, and the king supposed that they had returned. But they had gone by separate routes to separate ports. The weather was fair for the season of the year, with an east wind perhaps ; and each had found a

*Mandeville came afterwards to Canterbury, and being asked what he had been prepared to do if he had found the archbishop alive, he said 'that he would have taken the archbishop sharply to task for his attacks upon his sovereign : if the archbishop had been reasonable, there would have been peace; if he had persisted in his obstinacy and presumption, beyond doubt he would have been compelled to yield.' Mandeville, presumably, had direct instructions from the king. *Materials*, Vol. I, p. 126.



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vessel without difficulty to carry him across the Channel. The rendezvous was Sir Ranulf de Broc's castle of Saltwood, near Hythe, thirteen miles from Canterbury.

The archbishop meanwhile had returned from his adventurous expedition. The young king and his advisers had determined to leave him no fair cause of complaint, and had sent orders for the restoration of his wine and the release of the captured seaman ; but the archbishop would not wait for the State to do him justice. On Christmas Eve he was further exasperated by the appearance at the gate of his palace of one of his sumpter mules, which had been brutally mutilated by Sir Ranulf de Broc's kinsman Robert. 'The viper's brood,' as Herbert de Bosham said, 'were lifting up their heads. The hornets were out. Bulls of Bashan compassed the archbishop round about.' The Earl of Cornwall's warning had reached him, but 'fight, not flight,' was alone in his thoughts. He, too, was probably weary of the strife, and may have felt that he would serve his cause more effectually by death than by life. On Christmas day he preached in the cathedral on the text ' Peace to men of good will.' There was no peace, he said, except to men of good will. He spoke passionately of the trials of the church.



As he drew towards an end he alluded to the possibility of his own martyrdom. He could scarcely articulate for tears. The congregation were sobbing round him. Suddenly his face altered, his tone changed. Glowing with anger, with the fatal candles in front of him, and in a voice of thunder, the solemn and the absurd strangely blended in the over-whelming sense of his own wrongs, he cursed the intruders into his churches ; he cursed Sir Ranulf de Broc ; he cursed Robert de Broc for cutting off his mule's tail ; he cursed by name several of the old king's most intimate councillors who were at the court in Normandy. At each fierce imprecation he quenched a light, and dashed down a candle. ' As he spoke,' says the enthusiastic Herbert, repeating the figure under which he had described his master's appearance at Northampton, ' you saw the very beast of the prophet's vision, with the face of a lion and the face of a man.' He had drawn the spiritual sword, as he had sworn that he would. So experienced a man of the world could not have failed to foresee that he was provoking passions which would no longer respect his office, and that no rising in England would now be in time to save him. He was in better spirits, it was observed, after he had discharged his anathema. The



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Christmas festival was held in the hall. Asceticism was a virtue which was never easy to him. He indulged his natural inclinations at all permitted times, and on this occasion he ate and drank more copiously than usual.

The next day Becket received another warning that he was in personal danger. He needed no friends to tell him that. The only attention which he paid to these messages was to send his secretary Herbert and his cross-bearer Alexander Llewellyn to France, to report his situation to Lewis and to the Archbishop of Sens.* He told Herbert at parting that he would see his face no more.

So passed at Canterbury Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, the 26th, 27th, and 28th of December. On that same Monday afternoon the four knights arrived at Saltwood. They were expected, for Sir Ranulf with a party of men-at-arms had gone to meet them. There on their arrival they learned the fresh excommunications which had been pronounced against their host and against their friends at the court. The news could only have confirmed whatever resolutions they had formed.

* One of his complaints, presented by the Abbot of St. Albans, had been that his clergy were not allowed to leave the realm. There seems to have been no practical difficulty.



On the morning of the 29th they rode with an escort of horse along the old Roman road to Canterbury. They halted at St. Augustine's Monastery, where they were entertained by the abbot elect, Becket's old enemy, the scandalous Clarembald. They perhaps dined there. At any rate they issued a proclamation bidding the inhabitants remain quiet in their houses in the king's name, and then, with some of Clarembald's armed servants in addition to their own party, they went on to the great gate of the archbishop's palace. Leaving their men outside, the four knights alighted and entered the court. They unbuckled their swords, leaving them at the lodge, and, throwing gowns over their armour, they strode across to the door of the hall. Their appearance could hardly have been unexpected. It was now three o'clock in the afternoon. They had been some time in the town, and their arrival could not fail to have been reported. The archbishop's midday meal was over. The servants were dining on the remains, and the usual company of mendicants were waiting for their turn. The archbishop had been again disturbed at daybreak by intimation of danger. He had advised any of his clergy who were afraid to escape to Sandwich; but none of them had left him. He had heard

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mass as usual. He had received his customary floggings. At dinner, he observed, when some one remarked on his drinking, that a man that had blood to lose needed wine to support him. Afterwards he had retired into an inner room with John of Salisbury, his chaplain Fitzstephen, Edward Grim of Cambridge, who was on a visit to him, and several others, and was now sitting in conversation with them in the declining light of the winter afternoon till the bell should ring for vespers.

The knights were recognised, when they entered the hall, as belonging to the old king's court. The steward invited them to eat. They declined, and desired him to inform the archbishop that they had arrived with a message from the court. This was the first communication which the archbishop had received from Henry since he had used his name so freely to cover acts which, could Henry have anticipated them, would have barred his return to Canterbury for ever. The insincere professions of peace had covered an intention of provoking a rebellion. The truth was now plain. There was no room any more for excuse or palliation. What course had the king determined on ?*

* I have compiled the description of this remarkable scene from the different biographies. They vary slightly, but not much. Grim and Fitzstephen were both present.

The knights were introduced. They advanced. The archbishop neither spoke nor looked at them, but continued talking to a monk who was next him. He himself was sitting on a bed. The rest of the party present were on the floor. The knights seated themselves in the same manner, and for a few moments there was silence. Then Becket's black restless eye glanced from one to the other. He slightly noticed Tracy ; and Fitzurse said a few unrecorded sentences to him, which ended with ' God help you ! ' To Becket's friends the words sounded like insolence. They may have meant no more than pity.

Becket's face flushed. Fitzurse went on : ' We bring you the commands of the king beyond the sea ; will you hear us in public or in private ? ' Becket said he cared not. ' In private, then,' said Fitzurse. The monks thought afterwards that Fitzurse had meant to kill the archbishop where he sat. If the knights had entered the palace, thronged as it was with men, with any such intention, they would scarcely have left their swords behind them. The room was cleared, and a short altercation followed, of which nothing is known save that it ended speedily in high words on both sides. Becket called in his clergy again, his lay servants being excluded, and bade Fitzurse go on.

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"Be it so," Sir Reginald said. "Listen then to what the king says. When the peace was made, he put aside all his complaints against you. He allowed you to return, as you desired, free to your see. You have now added contempt to your other offences. You have broken the treaty. Your pride has tempted you to defy your lord and master to your own sorrow. You have censured the bishops by whose ministration the prince was crowned. You have pronounced an anathema against the king's ministers, by whose advice he is guided in the management of the Empire. You have made it plain that if you could you would take the prince's crown from him. Your plots and contrivances to attain your ends are notorious to all men. Say, then, will you attend us to the king's presence, and there answer for yourself ? For this we are sent."

The archbishop declared that he had never wished any hurt to the prince. The king had no occasion to be displeased if crowds came about him in the towns and cities after they had been so long deprived of his presence. If he had done any wrong he would make satisfaction, but he protested against being suspected of intentions which had never entered his mind.

Fitzurse did not enter into an altercation with



him, but continued : ‘The king commands further that you and your clerks repair without delay to the young king’s presence, and swear allegiance, and promise to amend your faults.’

The archbishop’s temper was rising. ‘I will do whatever may be reasonable,’ he said ; ‘but I tell you plainly the king shall have no oaths from me, nor from any one of my clergy. There has been too much perjury already. I have absolved many, with God’s help, who had perjured themselves.* I will absolve the rest when He permits.’

‘I understand you to say that you will not obey,’ said Fitzurse ; and went on in the same tone : ‘The king commands you to absolve the bishops whom you have excommunicated without his permission.’

‘The Pope sentenced the bishops,’ the archbishop said. ‘If you are not pleased, you must go to him. The affair is none of mine.’

Fitzurse said it had been done at his instigation, which he did not deny; but he proceeded to reassert that the king had given him permission. He had complained at the time of the peace of the

* He was alluding to the bishops who had sworn to the Constitutions of Clarendon.

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injury which he had suffered in the coronation, and the king had told him that he might obtain from the Pope any satisfaction for which he liked to ask.

If this was all the consent which the king had given, the pretence of his authority was inexcusable. ‘Ay, ay!’ said Fitzurse: ‘will you make the king out to be a traitor, then? The king gave you leave to excommunicate the bishops when they were acting by his own order! It is more than we can bear to listen to such monstrous accusations.’

John of Salisbury tried to check the archbishop’s imprudent tongue, and whispered to him to speak to the knights in private; but when the passion was on him, no mule was more ungovernable than Becket. Drawing to a conclusion, Fitzurse said to him: ‘Since you refuse to do any one of those things which the king requires of you, his final commands are that you and your clergy shall forthwith depart out of this realm and out of his dominions, never more to return. You have broken the peace, and the king cannot trust you again.’

Becket answered wildly that he would not go—never again would he leave England. Nothing but death should now part him from his



church. Stung by the reproach of ill-faith, he poured out the catalogue of his own injuries. He had been promised restoration, and instead of restoration he had been robbed and insulted. Ranulf de Broc had laid an embargo on his wine. Robert de Broc had cut off his mule's tail, and now the knights had come to menace him.

De Morville said that if he had suffered any wrong he had only to appeal to the council, and justice would be done.

Becket did not wish for the council's justice. 'I have complained enough,' he said ; 'so many wrongs are daily heaped upon me that I could not find messengers to carry the tale of them. I am refused access to the court. Neither one king nor the other will do me right. I will endure it no more. I will use my own powers as archbishop, and no child of man shall prevent me.'

'You will lay the realm under interdict then, and excommunicate the whole of us ?' said Fitzurse.

'So God help me,' said one of the others, 'he shall not do that. He has excommunicated over many already. We have borne too long with him.'

The knights sprang to their feet, twisting their gloves and swinging their arms. The archbishop



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rose. In the general noise words could no longer be accurately heard. At length the knights moved to leave the room, and addressing the archbishop's attendants, said, 'In the king's name we command you to see that this man does not escape.'

'Do you think I shall fly, then?' cried the archbishop. 'Neither for the king nor for any living man will I fly. You cannot be more ready to kill me than I am to die...Here you will find me,' he shouted, following them to the door as they went out, and calling after them. Some of his friends thought that he had asked De Morville to come back and speak quietly with him, but it was not so. He returned to his seat still excited and complaining.

'My lord,' said John of Salisbury to him, 'it is strange that you will never be advised. What occasion was there for you to go after these men and exasperate them with your bitter speeches? You would have done better surely by being quiet and giving them a milder answer. They mean no good, and you only commit yourself.'

The archbishop sighed, and said, 'I have done with advice. I know what I have before me.'

It must have been now past four o'clock; and unless there were lights the room was almost dark.



Beyond the archbishop's chamber was an ante-room, beyond the ante-room the hall. The knights, passing through the hall into the quadrangle, and thence to the lodge, called their men to arms. The great gate was closed. A mounted guard was stationed outside with orders to allow no one to go out or in. The knights threw off their cloaks and buckled on their swords. This was the work of a few minutes. From the cathedral tower the vesper bell was beginning to sound. The archbishop had seated himself to recover from the agitation of the preceding scene, when a breathless monk rushed in to say that the knights were arming. 'Who cares ? Let them arm,' was all that the archbishop said. His clergy were less indifferent. If the archbishop was ready for death, they were not. The door from the hall into the court was closed and barred, and a short respite was thus secured. The intention of the knights, it may be presumed, was to seize the archbishop and carry him off to Saltwood, or to De Morville's castle at Knaresborough, or perhaps to Normandy. Coming back to execute their purpose, they found themselves stopped by the hall door. To burst it open would require time; the ante-room between the hall and the archbishop's apartments opened by an oriel window

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and an outside stair into a garden. Robert de Broc, who knew the house well, led the way to it in the dusk. The steps were broken, but a ladder was standing against the window, by which the knights mounted, and the crash of the falling casement told the fluttered group about the archbishop that their enemies were upon them. There was still a moment. The party who entered by the window, instead of turning into the archbishop's room, first went into the hall to open the door and admit their comrades. From the archbishop's room a second passage, little used, opened into the north-west corner of the cloister, and from the cloister there was a way into the north transept of the cathedral. The cry was, 'To the church. To the church.' There at least there would be immediate safety.

The archbishop had told the knights that they would find him where they left him. He did not choose to show fear, or he was afraid, as some thought, of losing his martyrdom. He would not move. The bell had ceased. They reminded him that vespers had begun, and that he ought to be in the cathedral. Half yielding, half resisting, his friends swept him down the passage into the cloister. His cross had been forgotten in the haste. He refused to stir till it was fetched and carried



before him as usual. Then only, himself incapable of fear, and rebuking the terror of the rest, he advanced deliberately up the cloister to the church door.* As he entered the cathedral cries were heard from which it became plain that the knights had broken into the archbishop's room, had found the passage, and were following him. Almost immediately Fitzurse, Tracy, De Morville, and Le Breton were discerned, in the twilight, coming through the cloister in their armour, with drawn swords, and axes in their left hands. A company of men-at-arms was behind them. In front they were driving before them a frightened flock of monks.

From the middle of the transept in which the archbishop was standing a single pillar rose into the roof. On the eastern side of it opened a chapel of St. Benedict, in which were the tombs of several of the old primates. On the west, running parallel to the nave, was a lady chapel.

* Those who desire a more particular account of the scene about to be described should refer to Dean Stanley's essay on the murder of Becket, which is printed in his *Antiquities of Canterbury*. Along with an exact knowledge of the localities and a minute acquaintance with the contemporary narratives, Dr Stanley combines the far more rare power of historical imagination, which enables him to replace out of his materials an exact picture of what took place.

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Behind the pillar, steps led up into the choir, where voices were already singing vespers. A faint light may have been reflected into the transept from the choir tapers, and candles may perhaps have been burning before the altars in the two chapels—of light from without through the windows at that hour there could have been scarcely any. Seeing the knights coming on, the clergy who had entered with the archbishop closed the door and barred it. ‘What do you fear?’ he cried in a clear, loud voice. ‘Out of the way, you cowards! The Church of God must not be made a fortress.’ He stepped back and reopened the door with his own hands, to let in the trembling wretches who had been shut out. They rushed past him, and scattered in the hiding-places of the vast sanctuary, in the crypt, in the galleries, or behind the tombs. All, or almost all, even of his closest friends, William of Canterbury, Benedict, John of Salisbury himself, forsook him to shift for themselves, admitting frankly that they were unworthy of martyrdom. The archbishop was left alone with his chaplain Fitzstephen, Robert of Merton his old master, and Edward Grim, the stranger from Cambridge—or perhaps with Grim only, who says that he was the only one who stayed, and was the only one certainly who show-



ed any sign of courage. A cry had been raised in the choir that armed men were breaking into the cathedral. The vespers ceased ; the few monks assembled left their seats and rushed to the edge of the transept, looking wildly into the darkness.

The archbishop was on the fourth step beyond the central pillar ascending into the choir when the knights came in. The outline of his figure may have been just visible to them, if light fell upon it from candles in the lady chapel. Fitzurse passed to the right of the pillar, De Morville, Tracy, and Le Breton to the left. Robert de Broc and Hugh Mauclerc, an apostate priest, remained at the door by which they entered. A voice cried 'Where is the traitor ? Where is Thomas Becket ?' There was silence ; such a name could not be acknowledged. 'Where is the archbishop ?' Fitzurse shouted. 'I am here,' the archbishop replied, descending the steps, and meeting the knights full in the face. 'What do you want with me ? I am not afraid of your swords. I will not do what is unjust.' The knights closed round him. 'Absolve the persons whom you have excommunicated,' they said, 'and take off the suspensions.' 'They have made no satisfaction,' he answered ; 'I will not.' 'Then you shall die as you have deserved,' they said.

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They had not meant to kill him—certainly not at that time and in that place. One of them touched him on the shoulder with the flat of his sword, and hissed in his ears, ‘ Fly, or you are a dead man.’ There was still time ; with a few steps he would have been lost in the gloom of the cathedral, and could have concealed himself in any one of a hundred hiding-places. But he was careless of life, and he felt that his time was come. ‘ I am ready to die,’ he said. ‘ May the Church through my blood obtain peace and liberty! I charge you in the name of God that you hurt no one here but me.’ The people from the town were now pouring into the cathedral ; De Morville was keeping them back with difficulty at the head of the steps from the choir, and there was danger of a rescue. Fitzurse seized hold of the archbishop, meaning to drag him off as a prisoner. He had been calm so far ; his pride rose at the indignity of an arrest. ‘ Touch me not, Reginald !’ he said, wrenching his cloak out of Fitzurse’s grasp. ‘ Off, thou pander, thou !’ Le Breton and Fitzurse grasped him again, and tried to force him upon Tracy’s back. He grappled with Tracy and flung him to the ground, and then stood with his back against the pillar, Edward Grim supporting him. He reproached Fitzurse.



for ingratitude for past kindness ; Fitzurse whispered to him again to fly. ‘ I will not fly,’ he said, and then Fitzurse swept his sword over him and dashed off his cap. Tracy, rising from the pavement, struck direct at his head. Grim raised his arm and caught the blow. The arm fell broken, and the one friend found faithful sank back disabled against the wall. The sword, with its remaining force, wounded the archbishop above the forehead, and the blood trickled down his face. Standing firmly with his hands clasped, he bent his neck for the death-stroke, saying in a low voice, ‘ I am prepared to die for Christ and for his Church.’ These were his last words. Tracy again struck him. He fell forward upon his knees and hands. In that position Le Breton dealt him a blow which severed the scalp from the head and broke the sword against the stone, saying, ‘ Take that for my Lord William.’ De Broc or Mauclerc—the needless ferocity was attributed to both of them—strode forward from the cloister door, set his foot on the neck of the dead lion, and spread the brains upon the pavement with his sword’s point. ‘ We may go,’ he said ; ‘ the traitor is dead, and will trouble us no more.’

Such was the murder of Becket, the echoes of which are still heard across seven centuries of

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time, and which, be the final judgment upon it what it may, has its place among the most enduring incidents of English history. Was Becket a martyr, or was he justly executed as a traitor to his sovereign ? Even in that supreme moment of terror and wonder, opinions were divided among his own monks. That very night Grim heard one of them say, ' He is no martyr, he is justly served.' Another said, scarcely feeling, perhaps, the meaning of the words, ' He wished to be king and more than king. Let him be king, let him be king.' Whether the cause for which he died was to prevail, or whether the sacrifice had been in vain, hung on the answer which would be given to this momentous question. In a few days or weeks an answer came in a form to which in that age no rejoinder was possible, and the only uncertainty which remained at Canterbury was whether it was lawful to use the ordinary prayers for the repose of the dead man's soul, or whether, in consequence of the astounding miracles which were instantly worked by his remains, the Pope's judgment ought not to be anticipated, and the archbishop be at once adored as a saint in heaven.

James Anthony Froude.



EMANCIPATION—BLACK AND WHITE

Quashie's plaintive inquiry, "Am I not a man and a brother?" seems at last to have received its final reply—the recent decision of the fierce trial by battle on the other side of the Atlantic fully concurring with that long since delivered here in a more peaceful way.

The question is settled ; but even those who are most thoroughly convinced that the doom is just, must see good grounds for repudiating half the arguments which have been employed by the winning side ; and for doubting whether its ultimate results will embody the hopes of the victors though they may more than realise the fears of the vanquished. It may be quite true that some negroes are better than some white men ; but no rational man, cognisant of the facts, believes that the average negro is the equal, still less the superior, of the average white man. And, if this be true, it is simply incredible that, when all his disabilities are removed, and our prognathous relative has a fair field and no favour, as well as no oppressor, he will be able to compete successfully with his bigger-brained and smaller-jawed

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rival, in a contest which is to be carried on by thoughts and not by bites. The highest places in the hierarchy of civilisation will assuredly not be within the reach of our dusky cousins, though it is by no means necessary that they should be restricted to the lowest. But whatever the position of stable equilibrium into which the laws of social gravitation may bring the negro, all responsibility for the result will henceforward lie between Nature and him. The white man may wash his hands of it, and the Caucasian conscience be void of reproach for evermore. And this, if we look to the bottom of the matter, is the real justification for the abolition policy.

The doctrine of equal natural rights may be an illogical delusion ; emancipation may convert the slave from a well-fed animal into a pauperised man ; mankind may even have to do without cotton shirts ; but all these evils must be faced if the moral law, that no human being can arbitrarily dominate over another without grievous damage to his own nature, be, as many think, as readily demonstrable by experiment as any physical truth. If this be true, no slavery can be abolished without a double emancipation, and the master will benefit by freedom more than the freed-man.



The like considerations apply to all the other-questions of emancipation which are at present stirring the world—the multifarious demands that classes of mankind shall be relieved from restrictions imposed by the artifice of man, and not by the necessities of Nature. One of the most important, if not the most important, of all these, is that which daily threatens to become the “irrepressible” woman question. What social and political rights have women? What ought they to be allowed, or not allowed, to do, be, and suffer? And, as involved in, and underlying all these questions, how ought they to be educated?

There are philogynists as fanatical as any “misogynists” who, reversing our antiquated notions, bid the man look upon the woman as the higher type of humanity; who ask us to regard the female intellect as the clearer and the quicker, if not the stronger; who desire us to look up to the feminine moral sense as the purer and the nobler; and bid man abdicate his usurped sovereignty over Nature in favour of the female line. On the other hand, there are persons not to be outdone in all loyalty and just respect for womankind, but by nature hard of head and haters of delusion, however charming, who not only repudiate the new woman-worship which so many sentimentalists



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and some philosophers are desirous of setting up, but, carrying their audacity further, deny even the natural equality of the sexes. They assert, on the contrary, that in every excellent character, whether mental or physical, the average woman is inferior to the average man, in the sense of having that character less in quantity and lower in quality. Tell these persons of the rapid perceptions and the instinctive intellectual insight of women, and they reply that the feminine mental peculiarities, which pass under these names, are merely the outcome of a greater impressibility to the superficial aspects of things, and of the absence of that restraint upon expression which, in men, is imposed by reflection and a sense of responsibility. Talk of the passive endurance of the weaker sex, and opponents of this kind remind you that Job was a man, and that, until quite recent times, patience and long-suffering were not counted among the specially feminine virtues. Claim passionate tenderness as especially feminine, and the inquiry is made whether all the best love-poetry in existence (except, perhaps, the "Sonnets from the Portuguese") has not been written by men; whether the song which embodies the ideal of pure and tender passion—"Adelaida"—was



written by *Frau Beethoven*; whether it was the Fornarina, or Raphael, who painted the Sistine Madonna. Nay, we have known one such heretic go so far as to lay his hands upon the ark itself, so to speak, and to defend the startling paradox that, even in physical beauty, man is the superior. He admitted, indeed, that there was a brief period of early youth when it might be hard to say whether the prize should be awarded to the graceful undulations of the female figure, or the perfect balance and supple vigour of the male frame. But while our new Paris might hesitate between the youthful Bacchus and the Venus emerging from the foam, he averred that, when Venus and Bacchus had reached thirty, the point no longer admitted of a doubt; the male form having then attained its greatest nobility, while the female is far gone in decadence; and that, at this epoch, womanly beauty, so far as it is independent of grace or expression, is a question of drapery and accessories.

Supposing, however, that all these arguments have a certain foundation; admitting, for a moment, that they are comparable to those by which the inferiority of the negro to the white man may be demonstrated, are they of any value as against woman-emancipation? Do they

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afford us the smallest ground for refusing to educate women as well as men—to give women the same civil and political rights as men? No mistake is so commonly made by clever people as that of assuming a cause to be bad because the arguments of its supporters are, to a great extent, nonsensical. And we conceive that those who may laugh at the arguments of the extreme philogynists, may yet feel bound to work heart and soul towards the attainment of their practical ends.

As regards education, for example. Granting the alleged defects of women, is it not somewhat absurd to sanction and maintain a system of education which would seem to have been specially contrived to exaggerate all these defects?

Naturally not so firmly strung, nor so well balanced as boys, girls are in great measure debarred from the sports and physical exercises which are justly thought absolutely necessary for the full development of the vigour of the more favoured sex. Women are, by nature, more excitable than men—prone to be swept by tides of emotion, proceeding from hidden and inward, as well as from obvious and external causes; and female education does its best to weaken every physical counterpoise to this nervous mobility—



tends in all ways to stimulate the emotional part of the mind and stunt the rest. We find girls naturally timid, inclined to dependence, born conservatives ; and we teach them that independence is unladylike ; that blind faith is the right frame of mind ; and that whatever we may be permitted, and indeed encouraged, to do to our brother, our sister is to be left to the tyranny of authority and tradition. With few insignificant exceptions, girls have been educated either to be drudges, or toys, beneath man ; or a sort of angels above him ; the highest ideal aimed at oscillating between Clärchen and Beatrice. The possibility that the ideal of womanhood lies neither in the fair saint, nor in the fair sinner ; that the female type of character is neither better nor worse than the male, but only weaker ; that women are meant neither to be men's guides nor their playthings, but their comrades, their fellows, and their equals, so far as Nature puts no bar to that equality, does not seem to have entered into the minds of those who have had the conduct of the education of girls.

If the present system of female education stands self-condemned, as inherently absurd ; and if that which we have just indicated is the true position of woman, what is the first step towards

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a better state of things ? We reply, emancipate girls. Recognise the fact that they share the senses, perceptions, feelings, reasoning powers, emotions, of boys, and that the mind of the average girl is less different from that of the average boy, than the mind of one boy is from that of another ; so that whatever argument justifies a given education for all boys, justifies its application to girls as well. So far from imposing artificial restrictions upon the acquirement of knowledge by women, throw every facility in their way. Let our Faustinas, if they will, toil through the whole round of

" Juristerei und Medizin,
Und leider ! auch Philosophie."

Let us have " sweet girl graduates " by all means. They will be none the less sweet for a little wisdom ; and the " golden hair " will not curl less gracefully outside the head by reason of there being brains within. Nay, if obvious practical difficulties can be overcome, let those women who feel inclined to do so descend into the gladiatorial arena of life, not merely in the guise of *retiariæ*, as heretofore, but as bold *sicariæ*, breasting the open fray. Let them, if they so please, become merchants, barristers,



politicians. Let them have a fair field, but let them understand, as the necessary correlative, that they are to have no favour. Let Nature alone sit high above the lists, "rain influence and judge the prize."

And the result ? For our parts, though loth to prophesy, we believe it will be that of other emancipations. Women will find their place, and it will neither be that in which they have been held, nor that to which some of them aspire. Nature's old salique law will not be repealed, and no change of dynasty will be effected. The big chests, the massive brains, the vigorous muscles and stout frames of the best men will carry the day, whenever it is worth their while to contest the prizes of life with the best women. And the hardship of it is, that the very improvement of the women will lessen their chances. Better mothers will bring forth better sons, and the impetus gained by the one sex will be transmitted, in the next generation, to the other. The most Darwinian of theorists will not venture to propound the doctrine, that the physical disabilities under which women have hitherto laboured in the struggle for existence with men are likely to be removed by even the most skilfully conducted process of educational selection.



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We are, indeed, fully prepared to believe that the bearing of children may, and ought to, become as free from danger and long disability to the civilised woman as it is to the savage ; nor is it improbable that, as society advances towards its right organisation, motherhood will occupy a less space of woman's life than it has hitherto done. But still, unless the human species is to come to an end altogether—a consummation which can hardly be desired by even the most ardent advocate of " women's rights "—somebody must be good enough to take the trouble and responsibility of annually adding to the world exactly as many people as die out of it. In consequence of some domestic difficulties, Sydney Smith is said to have suggested that it would have been good for the human race had the model offered by the hive been followed, and had all the working part of the female community been neuters. Failing any thorough-going reform of this kind, we see nothing for it but the old division of humanity into men potentially, or actually, fathers, and women potentially, if not actually, mothers. And we fear that so long as this potential motherhood is her lot, woman will be found to be fearfully weighted in the race of life.



The duty of man is to see that not a grain is piled upon that load beyond what Nature imposes ; that injustice is not added to inequality.

Thomas Henry Huxley.



SCIENCE IN EDUCATION*

When the history of Education during the nineteenth century comes to be written, one of its most striking features will be presented by the rise and growth of Science in the general educational arrangements of every civilised country. At the beginning of the century our schools and colleges were still following, with comparatively little change, the methods and subjects of tuition that had been in use from the time of the Middle Ages. But the extraordinary development of the physical and natural sciences, which has done so much to alter the ordinary conditions of life, has powerfully affected also our system of public instruction. The medieval circle of studies has been widely recognised not to supply all the mental training needed in the ampler range of modern requirement. Science has, step by step, gained a footing in the strongholds of the older learning. Not without vehement struggle, however, has she been able to intrench herself there. Even now,

* An address to the students of Mason University College, Birmingham, at the opening of the session, on Tuesday, 4th October, 1898.



although her ultimate victory is assured, the warfare is by no means at an end. The jealousy of the older régime and the strenuous, if sometimes blatant, belligerency of the reformers have not yet been pacified ; and, from time to time, within our public schools and universities, there may still be heard the growls of opposition and the shouts of conflict. But these sounds are growing fainter. Even the most conservative don hardly ventures nowadays openly to denounce science and all her works. Grudgingly, it may be, but yet perforce, he has to admit the teaching of modern science to a place among the subjects which the university embraces, and in which it grants degrees. In our public schools a 'modern side' has been introduced, and even on the classical side an increasing share of the curriculum is devoted to oral and practical teaching in science. New colleges have been founded in the more important centres of population, for the purpose, more particularly, of enabling the community to obtain a thorough education in modern science.

The mainspring of this remarkable educational revolution has, doubtless, been the earnest conviction that the older learning was no longer adequate in the changed and changing conditions of our time ; that vast new fields of knowledge, open-

ed up by the increased study of nature, ought to be included in any scheme of instruction intended to fit men for the struggle of modern life, and that in this newer knowledge much might be found to minister to the highest ends of education. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that utilitarian considerations have not been wholly absent from the minds of the reformers. Science has many and far-reaching practical applications. It has called into existence many new trades and professions, and has greatly modified many of those of older date. In a thousand varied ways it has come into the ordinary affairs of everyday life. Its cultivation has brought innumerable material benefits ; its neglect would obviously entail many serious industrial disadvantages, and could not fail to leave us behind in the commercial progress of the nations of the globe.

So much have these considerations pressed upon the attention of the public in recent years that, besides all the other educational machinery to which I have referred, technical schools have been established in many towns for the purpose of teaching the theory as well as the practice of various arts and industries, and making artisans understand the nature of the processes with which their trades are concerned.



That this educational transformation, which has been advancing during the century, has resulted in great benefit to the community at large can hardly be denied. Besides the obvious material gains, there has been a widening of the whole range and methods of our teaching ; the old subjects are better, because more scientifically, taught, and the new subjects enlist the attention and sympathy of large classes of pupils whom the earlier studies only languidly interested. Nevertheless, it is incumbent on those who have advocated and carried out this change to ask themselves whether it has brought with it no drawbacks. They may be sure that no such extensive reform could possibly be introduced without defects appearing in it somewhere. And it is well to look these defects in the face, and, as far as may be possible, remove them. In considering how I might best discharge the duty with which I have been honoured of addressing the students of Masen College this evening, I have thought that it might not be inappropriate if, as a representative of science, I were to venture to point out some of the drawbacks as well as the advantages of the position which science has attained in our educational system.

At the outset no impartial onlooker can fail to-

notice that the natural reaction against the dominance of the older learning has tended to induce an undervaluing of the benefits which that learning afforded and can still bestow. In this college, indeed, and in other institutions more specially designed for instruction in science, provision has also been made for the teaching of Latin, Greek, and the more important modern languages and literatures. But in such institutions, these subjects usually hold only a subordinate place. It can hardly be denied that generally throughout the country, even although the literary side of education still maintains its pre-eminence in our public schools and universities, it is losing ground, and that every year it occupies less of the attention of students of science. The range of studies which the science examinations demand is always widening, while the academic period within which these studies must be crowded undergoes no extension. Those students, therefore, who, whether from necessity or choice, have taken their college education in science, naturally experience no little difficulty in finding time for the absolutely essential subjects required for their degrees. Well may they declare that it is hopeless for them to attempt to engage in anything more, and especially in anything that will not tell directly on their places in.



the final class-lists. With the best will in the world, and with even, sometimes, a bent for literary pursuits, they may believe themselves compelled to devote their whole time and energies to the multifarious exactions of their science curriculum.

Such a result of our latest reformation in education may be unavoidable, but it is surely matter for regret. A training in science and scientific methods, admirable as it is in so many ways, fails to supply those humanising influences which the older learning can so well impart. For the moral stimulus that comes from an association with all that is noblest and best in the literatures of the past, for the culture and taste that spring from prolonged contact with the highest models of literary expression, for the widening of our sympathies and the vivifying of our imagination by the study of history and philosophy, the teaching of science has no proper equivalents.

Men who have completed their formal education with little or no help from the older learning may be pardoned should they be apt to despise such help and to believe that they can very well dispense with it in the race of life. My first earnest advice to the science

students of this College is, not to entertain this belief and to refuse to act on it. Be assured that, in your future career whatever it may be, you will find in literature a source of solace and refreshment, of strength and encouragement, such as no department of science can give you. There will come times, even to the most enthusiastic among you, when scientific work, in spite of its absorbing interest, grows to be a weariness. At such times as these you will appreciate the value of the literary culture you may have received at school or college. Cherish the literary tastes you have acquired, and devote yourself sedulously to the further cultivation of them during such intervals of leisure as you may be able to secure.

Over and above the pleasure which communion with the best books will bring with it, two reasons of a more utilitarian kind may be given to science students why they should seek this communion. Men who have been too exclusively trained in science, or are too much absorbed in its pursuit, are not always the most agreeable members of society. They are apt to be somewhat angular and professional, contributing little that is interesting to general conversation, save when they get a chance of



introducing their own science and its doings. Perhaps the greatest bore I ever met was a man of science, whose mind and training were so wholly mathematical and physical that he seemed unable to look at the simplest subject save in its physical relations, about which he would discourse till he had long exhausted the patience of the auditor whom he detained. There is no more efficacious remedy for this tendency to what is popularly known as 'shop' than the breadth and culture of mind that spring from wide reading in ancient and modern literature.

The other reason for the advice I offer you is one of which you will hardly, perhaps, appreciate the full force in the present stage of your career. One result of the comparative neglect of the literary side of education by many men of Science is conspicuously seen in their literary style. It is true that in our time we have had some eminent scientific workers, who have also been masters of nervous and eloquent English. But it is not less true that the literature of science is burdened with a vast mass of slipshod, ungrammatical and clumsy writing, wherein sometimes even the meaning of the authors is left in doubt. Let me press upon you the obvious duty of not increasing this

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unwieldy burden. Study the best masters of style, and when once you have made up your minds what you want to say, try to express it in the simplest, clearest, and most graceful language you can find.

Remember that, while education is the drawing out and cultivation of all the powers of the mind, no system has yet been devised that will by itself develop with equal success every one of these powers. The system under which we have been trained may have done as much for us as it can do. Each of us is thereafter left to supplement its deficiencies by self-culture. And in the ordinary science-instruction of the time one of the most obvious of these inevitable deficiencies is the undue limitation or neglect of the literary side of education.

But in the science-instruction itself there are dangers regarding which we cannot be too watchful. In this college and in all the other well-organised scientific institutions of the country, the principles of science are taught orally and experimentally. Every branch of knowledge is expounded in its bearings on other branches. Its theory is held up as the first great aim of instruction, and its practical applications are made subsequent and subordi-



nate. Divisions of science are taught here which may have few practical applications, but which are necessary for a comprehensive survey of the whole circle of scientific truth. Now, you may possibly have heard, and in the midst of a busy industrial community you are not unlikely to hear, remarks made in criticism of this system or method of tuition. The importance of scientific training will be frankly acknowledged and even insisted upon, but you will sometimes hear this admission coupled with the proviso that the science must be of a practical kind ; must, in short, be just such and no other, as will fit young men to turn it to practical use in the manufactures or industries to which they may be summoned. The critics who make this limitation boast that they are practical men, and that in their opinion theory is useless or worse for the main purposes for which they would encourage and support a great scientific school.

Now I am quite sure that those science students who have passed even a single session in Mason College can see for themselves the utter fallacy of such statements and the injury that would be done to the practical usefulness of this institution, and to the general progress of the industrial applications of science, if such short-

sighted views were ever carried into effect. There can be no thorough, adequate, and effective training in science unless it be based on a comprehensive study of facts and principles, altogether apart from any economic uses to which they may be put. Science must be pursued for her own sake, in the first instance, and without reference to any pecuniary benefits she may be able to confer. We never can tell when the most theoretical part of pure science may be capable of being turned to the most important practical uses. Who could have surmised, for instance, that in the early tentative experiments of Volta, Galvani, and others last century lay the germ of the modern world-grasping electric telegraph ? Or when Wedgwood, at the beginning of this century, copied paintings by the agency of light upon nitrate of silver, who could have foretold that he was laying the foundations of the marvellous art of photography?

There can be no more pernicious doctrine than that which would measure the commercial value of science by its immediate practical usefulness, and would restrict its place in education to those only of its sub-divisions which may be of service to the industries of the present time. Such a curtailed method of instruction is not education



in the true sense of the term. It is only a kind of cramming for a specific purpose, and the knowledge which it imparts, being one-sided and imperfect, is of little value beyond its own limited range. I by no means wish to undervalue the importance of technical instruction. By all means let our artisans know as much as can be taught them regarding the nature and laws of the scientific processes in which they are engaged. But it is not by mere technical instruction that we shall maintain and extend the industrial and commercial greatness of the country. If we are not only to hold our own, but to widen the boundaries of applied science, to perfect our manufactures, and to bring new departments of Nature into the service of man, it is by broad, thorough, untrammelled scientific research that our success must be achieved.

When, therefore, you are asked to explain of what practical use are some of the branches of science in which you have been trained, do not lose patience with your questioner, nor answer him as you think such a Philistine deserves to be answered. Give him a few illustrations of the thousands of ways in which science, that might have been stigmatised by him as merely abstract and theoretical, has yet been made to minister to



the practical needs of humanity. Above all, urge him to attend some of the classes of Mason College, where he will learn, in the most effectual manner, the intimate connection between theory and practice. If he chance to be wealthy, the experiment may possibly open his eyes to the more urgent needs of the institution and induce him to contribute liberally towards their satisfaction.

Among the advantages and privileges of your life at college there is one, the full significance and value of which you will better appreciate in later years. You have here an opportunity of acquiring a wide general view of the whole range of scientific thought and method. If you proceed to a science degree you are required to lay a broad foundation of acquaintance with the physical and biological sciences. You are thus brought into contact with the subjects of each great department of natural knowledge, and you learn enough regarding them to enable you to understand their scope and to sympathise with the workers who are engaged upon them. But when your academical career is ended, no such chance of wide general training is ever likely to be yours again. You will be dragged into the whirl of life, where you will probably find little time or oppor-



tunity to travel much beyond the sphere of employment to which you may have been called. Make the most, therefore, of the advantages which in this respect you meet with here. Try to ensure that your acquaintance with each branch of science embraced in your circle of studies shall be as full and accurate as lies in your power to make it. Even in departments outside the bounds of your own tastes and ultimate requirements, do not neglect the means provided for your gaining some knowledge of them. I urge this duty, not because its diligent discharge will obviously tell in your examinations, but because it will give you that scientific culture which while enabling you to appreciate and enjoy the successive advances of other sciences than that which you may select for special cultivation, will at the same time increase your general usefulness and aid you in your own researches.

The days of Admirable Crichtons are long since past. So rapid and general is the onward march of science that not only can no man keep pace with it in every direction, but it has become almost hopelessly impossible to remain abreast of the progress in each of the several sub-divisions of even a single science. We are entering more and more upon the age of specialists. It grows

increasingly difficult for the specialists, even in kindred sciences, to remain in touch with each other. When you find yourselves fairly launched into the vortex of life you will look back with infinite satisfaction to the time when you were enabled to lay a broad and solid platform of general acquirement within the walls of this college.

Perhaps the most remarkable defect in the older or literary methods of education was the neglect of the faculty of observation. For the training of the other mental faculties ample provision was made, but for this, one of the most important of the whole, no care was taken. If a boy was naturally observant, he was left to cultivate the use of his eyes as he best might ; if he was not observant, nothing was done to improve him in this respect, unless it were, here and there, by the influence of such an intelligent teacher as is described in Mrs. Barbauld's famous story of *Eyes and No Eyes*. Even when science began to be introduced into our schools, it was still taught in the old or literary fashion. Lectures and lessons were given by masters who got up their information from books, but had no practical knowledge of the subjects they taught. Class-books were written by men equally destitute of a



personal acquaintance with any department of science. The lessons were learnt by rote, and not infrequently afforded opportunities rather for frolic than for instruction. Happily this state of things, though not quite extinct, is rapidly passing away. Practical tuition is everywhere coming into use, while the old-fashioned cut-and-dry lesson-book is giving way to the laboratory, the field-excursion, and the school-museum.

It is mainly through the eyes that we gain our knowledge and appreciation of the world in which we live. But we are not all equally endowed with the gift of intelligent vision. On the contrary, in no respect, perhaps, do we differ more from each other than in our powers of observation. Obviously, a man who has a quick eye to note what passes around him must, in the ordinary affairs of life, stand at a considerable advantage over another man who moves unobservantly on his course. We cannot create an observing faculty any more than we can create a memory, but we may do much to develop both. This is a feature in education of much more practical and national importance than might be supposed. I suspect that it lies closer than might be imagined to the success of our commercial relations abroad. Our prevalent system of instruction has for

generations past done nothing to cultivate the habit of observation, and has thus undoubtedly left us at a disadvantage in comparison with nations that have adopted methods of tuition wherein the observing faculty is regularly trained. With our world-wide commerce we have gone on supplying to foreign countries the same manufactured goods for which our fathers found markets in all quarters of the globe. Our traders, however, now find themselves in competition with traders from other nations who have been trained to better use of their powers of observation, and who, taking careful note of the gradually changing tastes and requirements of the races which they visit, have been quick to report these changes and to take means for meeting them. Thus, in our own centres of trade we find ourselves in danger of being displaced by rivals with sharper eyes and greater powers of adaptation.

It is the special function of science to cultivate this faculty of observation. Here in Mason College, from the very beginning of your scientific studies you have been taught to use your eyes, to watch the phenomena that appear and disappear around you, to note the sequence and relation of these phenomena, and thus, as it were, to enter beneath the surface into the very soul of things.



You cannot, however, have failed to remark among your fellow-students great inequalities in their powers of observation, and great differences in the development of these powers under the very same system of instruction. And you may have noticed that, speaking generally, those class-mates who have shown the best observing faculty have taken a foremost place among their fellows. It is not a question of mere brain-power. A man may possess a colossal intellect, while his faculty of observation may be of the feeblest kind. One of the greatest mathematicians of this century who, full of honours, recently passed away from us, had so little cognisance of his surroundings, that many ludicrous stories are told of his child-like mistakes as to place and time.

The continued development of the faculty of prompt and accurate observation is a task on which you cannot bestow too much attention. Your education here must already have taught you its value. In your future career the use you make of this faculty may determine your success or your failure. But not only have your studies in this college trained your observing powers, they have at the same time greatly widened the range of your mental vision by the variety of objects which you have been compelled to look at

and examine. The same methods which have been so full of benefit to you here can be continued by you in after life. And be assured that in maintaining them in active use you will take the most effective means for securing success in the careers you may choose to follow.

But above and beyond the prospect of any material success there is a higher motive which will doubtless impel you. The education of your observing faculty has been carried on during your introduction to new realms of knowledge. The whole domain of Nature has been spread out before you. You have been taught to observe thousands of objects and processes of which, common though they may be, you had previously taken no note. Henceforth, wherever you may go, you cannot wander with ignorant or unobservant eyes. Land and sea and sky, bird and beast and flower, now awaken in you a new interest, for you have learned lessons from them that have profoundly impressed you, and you have discovered meanings in them of which you had never dreamed. You have been permitted to pass within the veil of nature, and to perceive some of the inner mechanism of this world.

Thus, your training in science has not only taught you to use your eyes, but to use them



intelligently, and in such a way as to see much more in the world around you than is visible to the uninstructed man. This widened perception might be illustrated from any department of natural science. Let me take, by way of example, the relation of the student of science towards the features and charms of landscape. It may be said that no training is needed to comprehend these beauties ; that the man in the street, the holiday-maker from town, is just as competent as the man of science to appreciate them, and get quite as much pleasure out of them. We need not stop to discuss the relative amounts of enjoyment which different orders of spectators may derive from scenery ; but obviously the student of science has one great advantage in this matter. Not only can he enjoy to the full all the outward charms which appeal to the ordinary eye, but he sees in the features of the landscape new charms and interests which the ordinary untrained eye cannot see. Your accomplished Professor of Geology has taught you the significance of the outer lineaments of the land. While under his guidance you have traced with delight the varied features of the lovely landscapes of the Midlands, your eyes have been trained to mark their connection with each other, and their

respective places in the ordered symmetry of the whole scene. You perceive why there is here a height and there a hollow; you note what has given the ridges and vales their dominant forms and directions; you detect the causes that have spread out a meadow in one place and raised up a hill in another.

Above and beyond all questions as to the connection and origin of its several parts, the landscape appeals vividly to your imagination. You know that it has not always worn the aspect which it presents to-day. You have observed in these ridges proofs that the sea once covered their site. You have seen the remains of long extinct shells, fishes, and reptiles that have been disinterred from the mud and silt left behind by the vanished waters. You have found evidence that not once only, but again and again, after vast lapses of time and many successive revolutions, the land has sunk beneath the ocean and has once more emerged. You have been shown traces of underground commotion, and you can point to places where, over central England, volcanoes were once active. You have learnt that the various elements of the landscape have thus been gradually put together during successive ages, and that the slow processes, whereby the characteristic forms of the



ground have been carved out, are still in progress under your eye.

While, therefore, you are keenly alive to the present beauty of the scene, it speaks to you at every turn of the past. Each feature recalls some incident in the strange primeval history that has been transacted here. The succession of contrasts between what is now and what has been fills you with wonder and delight. You feel as if a new sense had been given to you, and that with its aid your appreciation of scenery has been enlarged and deepened to a marvellous degree.

And so too is it with your relation to all the other departments of Nature. The movements of the clouds, the fall of rain, the flow of brook and river, the changes of the seasons, the succession of calm and storm, do not pass before your eyes now as they once did. While they minister to the joy of life, they speak to you of that all-embracing system of process and law that governs the world. The wayside flower is no longer to your eyes merely a thing of beauty. You have found it to be that and far more—an exquisite organism in which the several parts are admirably designed to promote the growth of the plant and to perpetuate the life of the species. Every insect and bird is now to you an embodiment of the

mystery of life. The forces of Nature, once so dark and so dreaded, are now seen by you to be intelligible, orderly and capable of adaptation to the purposes of man. In the physical and chemical laboratories you have been brought into personal contact with these forces, and have learnt to direct their operations, as you have watched the manifold effects of energy upon the infinite varieties of matter.

When you have completed your course of study and leave this college, crowned, I hope, with academic distinction, there will be your future career in life to choose and follow. A small number among you may, perhaps, be so circumstanced as to be able to devote yourselves entirely to original scientific research, selecting such branches of inquiry as may have specially interested you here, and giving up your whole time and energy to investigation. A much larger number will, no doubt, enter professions where a scientific training can be turned to practical account, and you may become engineers, chemists, or medical men. But in the struggle for existence, which every year grows keener amongst us, these professions are more and more crowded, so that a large proportion of your ranks may not succeed in finding places there, and may in the end be pushed



into walks in life where there may be little or no opportunity for making much practical use of the knowledge in science which you have gained here. To those who may ultimately be thus situated it will always be of advantage to have had the mental training given in this institution, and it will probably be your own fault if, even under unfavourable conditions, you do not find, from time to time, chances of turning your scientific acquirements to account. Your indebtedness to your professors demands that you shall make the effort, and, for the credit of the college, you are bound to do your best.

Among the mental habits which your education in science has helped to foster, there are a few which I would specially commend to your attention as worthy of your most sedulous care all through life.

In the first place I would put Accuracy. You have learnt in the laboratory how absolutely essential this condition is for scientific investigation. We are all supposed to make the ascertainment of the truth our chief aim, but we do not all take the same trouble to attain it. Accuracy involves labour, and every man is not gifted with an infinite capacity for taking pains. Inexactness of observation is sure sooner or later to be detected,

and to be visited on the head of the man who commits it. If his observations are incorrect, the conclusions he has drawn from them may be vitiated. Thus all the toil he has endured in a research may be rendered of no avail, and the reputation he might have gained is not only lost but replaced by discredit. It is quite true that absolute accuracy is often unattainable ; you can only approach it. But the greater the exertion you make to reach it, the greater will be the success of your investigations. The effort after accuracy will be transferred from your scientific work to your everyday life and become a habit of mind, advantageous both to yourselves and to society at large.

In the next place, I would set Thoroughness, which is closely akin to accuracy. Again, your training here has shown you how needful it is in scientific research to adopt thorough and exhaustive methods of procedure. The conditions to be taken into account are so numerous and complex, the possible combinations so manifold, before a satisfactory conclusion can be reached. A laborious collection of facts must be made. Each supposed fact must be sifted out and weighed. The evidence must be gone over again and yet again, each link in its chain being scrupulously



tested. The deduction to which the evidence may seem to point must be closely and impartially scrutinised, every other conceivable explanation of the facts being frankly and fully considered. Obviously the man whose education has inured him to the cultivation of a mental habit of this kind is admirably equipped for success in any walk in life which he may be called upon to enter. The accuracy and thoroughness which you have learnt to appreciate and practise at college must never be dropped in later years. Carry them with you as watchwords, and make them characteristic of all your undertakings.

In the third place, we may take Breadth. At the outset of your scientific education you were doubtless profoundly impressed by the multiplicity of detail which met your eye in every department of natural knowledge. When you entered upon the study of one of these departments, you felt, perhaps, almost overpowered and bewildered by the vast mass of facts with which you had to make acquaintance. And yet as your training advanced, you gradually came to see that the infinite variety of phenomena could all be marshalled, according to definite laws, into groups and series. You were led to look beyond the details to the great principles that underlie them

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and bind them into a harmonious and organic whole. With the help of a guiding system of classification, you were able to see the connection between the separate facts, to arrange them according to their mutual relations, and thus to ascend to the great general laws under which the material world has been constructed. With all attainable thoroughness in the mastery of detail, you have been taught to combine a breadth of treatment which enables you to find and keep a leading clue even through the midst of what might seem a tangled web of confusion. There are some men who cannot see the wood for the trees, and who consequently can never attain great success in scientific investigation. Let it be your aim to master fully the details of the tree, and yet to maintain such a breadth of vision as will enable you to embrace the whole forest within your ken. I need not enlarge on the practical value of this mental habit in everyday life, nor point out the excellent manner in which a scientific education tends to develop it.

In the fourth place, I would inculcate the habit of wide Reading in scientific literature. Although the progress of science is now too rapid for any man to keep pace with the advance of all its departments, you should try to hold yourselves



in touch with at least the main results arrived at in other branches than your own ; while, in that branch itself, it should be your constant aim to watch every onward step that is taken by others, and not to fall behind the van. This task you will find to be no light one. Even were it confined to a survey of the march of science in your own country, it would be arduous enough to engage much of your time. But science belongs to no country, and continues its onward advance all over the globe. If you would keep yourselves informed regarding this progress in other countries, as you are bound to do if you would not willingly be left behind, you will need to follow the scientific literature of those countries. You must be able to read at least French and German. You will find in these languages a vast amount of scientific work relating to your own department, and to this accumulated pile of published material the journals of every month continue to add. In many ways it is a misfortune that the literature of science increases so fast ; but we must take the evil with the good. Practice will eventually enable you to form a shrewd judgment as to which authors or papers you may skip without serious danger of losing any valuable fact or useful suggestion.

In the fifth place, let me plead for the virtue of Patience. In a scientific career we encounter two dangers, for the avoidance of which patience is our best support and guide. When life is young and enthusiasm is boundless ; when from the details which we may have laboriously gathered together we seem to catch sight of some new fact or principle, some addition of more or less importance to the sum of human knowledge, there may come upon us the eager desire to make our discovery known. We may long to be allowed to add our own little stone to the growing temple of science. We may think of the pride with which we should see our names enrolled among those of the illustrious builders by whom this temple has been slowly reared since the infancy of mankind. So we commit our observations to writing, and send them for publication. Eventually we obtain the deep gratification of appearing in print among well-known authors in science. Far be it from me to condemn this natural desire for publicity. But, as your experience grows, you will probably come to agree with me that if the desire were more frequently and energetically curbed, scientific literature would gain much thereby. There is amongst us far too much hurry in publication. We are so afraid lest our observations or deduc-



tions should be forestalled—so anxious not to lose our claim to priority, that we rush before the world, often with a half-finished performance, which must be corrected, supplemented, or cancelled by some later communication. It is this feverish haste which is largely answerable for the mass of jejune, ill-digested, and erroneous matter that cumbers the pages of modern scientific journals. Here it is that you specially need patience. Before you venture to publish anything, take the utmost pains to satisfy yourselves that it is true, that it is new, and that it is worth putting into print. And be assured that this reticence, while it is a kindness to the literature of science, will most certainly bring with it its own reward to yourselves. It will increase your confidence, and make your ultimate contributions more exact in their facts as well as more accurate and convincing in their argument.

The other danger to which I referred as demanding patience is of an opposite kind. As we advance in our career, and the facts of our investigations accumulate around us, there will come times of depression when we seem lost in a labyrinth of detail out of which no path appears to be discoverable. We have, perhaps, groped our way through this maze, following now one

clue, now another, that seemed to promise some outlet to the light. But the darkness has only closed around us the deeper, and we feel inclined to abandon the research as one in which success is, for us at least, unattainable. When this blankness of despair shall come upon you, take courage under it, by remembering that a patient study of any department of nature is never labour thrown away. Every accurate observation you have made, every new fact you have established, is a gain to science. You may not for a time see the meaning of these observations, nor the connection of these facts. But their meaning and connection are sure in the end to be made out. You have gone through the labour necessary for the ascertainment of truth, and if you patiently and watchfully bide your time, the discovery of the truth itself may reward your endurance and your toil.

It is by failures as well as by successes that the true ideal of the man of science is reached. The task allotted to him in life is one of the noblest that can be undertaken. It is his to penetrate into the secrets of Nature, to push back the circumference of darkness that surrounds us, to disclose ever more and more of the limitless beauty, harmonious order and imperious law that



extend throughout the universe. And while he thus enlarges our knowledge, he shows us also how Nature may be made to minister in an ever-augmenting multiplicity of ways to the service of humanity. It is to him and his conquests that the material progress of our race is mainly due. If he were content merely to look back over the realms which he has subdued, he might well indulge in jubilant feelings, for his peaceful victories have done more for the enlightenment and progress of mankind than were ever achieved by the triumphs of war. But his eye is turned rather to the future than to the past. In front of him rises the wall of darkness that shrouds from him the still unknown. What he has painfully accomplished seems to him but little in comparison with infinite possibilities that lie beyond. And so he presses onward, not self-satisfied and exultant, but rather humbled and reverential, yet full of hope and courage for the work of further conquest that lies before him.

Such is the task in which you may be called to share. When you have entered upon it and have learnt something of its trials and responsibilities, as well as of its joys and rewards, you will look back with gratitude to the training you received within the walls of this college. You will feel

even more keenly than you do now how much you owe to the patient kindness and educational skill of your teachers and to the healthy stimulus of contact and competition with your class-fellows. Most heartily do I wish you success in your several careers. Following up the paths which have been opened for you here, may it be yours to enlarge still further the circle of light which science has gained, and to wrest from Nature new aids for the service of mankind.

Sir Archibald Geikie.



A LIVING GOD

From immemorial time the shores of Japan have been swept, at irregular intervals of centuries, by enormous tidal waves,—tidal waves caused by earthquakes or by submarine volcanic action. These awful sudden risings of the sea are called by the Japanese *tsunami*. The last one occurred on the evening of June 17, 1896, when a wave nearly two hundred miles long struck the north-eastern provinces of Miyagi, Iwate and Aomori, wrecking scores of towns and villages, ruining whole districts, and destroying nearly thirty thousand human lives. The story of Hamaguchi Gohei is the story of a like calamity which happened long before the era of Meiji, on another part of the Japanese coast.

He was an old man at the time of the occurrence that made him famous. He was the most influential resident of the village to which he belonged: he had been for many years its *muraosa*, or headman; and he was not less liked than respected. The people usually called him *Ojiisan*, which means Grandfather; but, being the richest member of the community, he was sometimes

officially referred to as the Chōja. He used to advise the smaller farmers about their interests, to arbitrate their disputes, to advance them money at need, and to dispose of their rice for them on the best terms possible.

Hamaguchi's big thatched farmhouse stood at the verge of a small plateau overlooking a bay. The plateau, mostly devoted to rice culture, was hemmed in on three sides by thickly-wooded summits. From its outer verge the land sloped down in a huge green concavity, as if scooped out, to the edge of the water ; and the whole of this slope, some three-quarters of a mile long, was so terraced as to look, when viewed from the open sea, like an enormous flight of green steps, divided in the centre by a narrow white zigzag,—a streak of mountain road. Ninety thatched dwellings and a Shintō temple, composing the village proper, stood along the curve of the bay ; and other houses climbed straggling up the slope from some distance on either side of the narrow road leading to the Chōja's home.

One autumn evening Hamaguchi Gohei was looking down from the balcony of his house at some preparations for a merry-making in the village below. There had been a very fine rice-crop and the peasants were going to celebrate



their harvest by a dance in the court of the *ujigami*. The old man could see the festival banners (*nobori*) fluttering above the roofs of the solitary street, the strings of paper lanterns festooned between bamboo poles, the decorations of the shrine, and the brightly-coloured gathering of the young people. He had nobody with him that evening but his little grandson, a lad of ten ; the rest of the household having gone early to the village. He would have accompanied them had he not been feeling less strong than usual.

The day had been oppressive ; and in spite of a rising breeze there was still in the air that sort of heavy heat which, according to the experience of the Japanese peasant, at certain seasons precedes an earthquake. And presently an earthquake came. It was not strong enough to frighten anybody ; but Hamaguchi, who had felt hundreds of shocks in his time, thought it was queer,—a long, slow, spongy motion. Probably it was but the after-tremor of some immense seismic action very far away. The house crackled and rocked gently several times ; then all became still again.

As the quaking ceased Hamaguchi's keen old eyes were anxiously turned toward the village. It often happens that the attention of a person gazing fixedly at a particular spot or object is

suddenly diverted by the sense of something not knowingly seen at all,—by a mere vague feeling of the unfamiliar in that dim outer circle of unconscious perception which lies beyond the field of clear vision. Thus it chanced that Hamaguchi became aware of something unusual in the offing. He rose to his feet, and looked at the sea. It had darkened quite suddenly, and it was acting strangely. It seemed to be moving against the wind. *It was running away from the land.*

Within a very little time the whole village had noticed the phenomenon. Apparently no one had felt the previous motion of the ground, but all were evidently astounded by the movement of the water. They were running to the beach, and even beyond the beach, to watch it. No such ebb had been witnessed on that coast within the memory of living man. Things never seen before were making apparition ; unfamiliar spaces of ribbed sand and reaches of weed-hung rock were left bare even as Hamaguchi gazed. And none of the people below appeared to guess what that monstrous ebb signified.

Hamaguchi Gohei himself had never seen such a thing before ; but he remembered things told him in his childhood by his father's father, and he knew all the traditions of the coast. He under-



stood what the sea was going to do. Perhaps he thought of the time needed to send a message to the village, or to get the priests of the Buddhist temple on the hill to sound their big bell . . . But it would take very much longer to tell what he might have thought than it took him to think. He simply called to his grandson :—

‘ Tada !—quick,—very quick ! . . . Light me a torch.’

Taimatsu, or pine-torches, are kept in many coast dwellings for use on stormy nights, and also for use at certain Shintō festivals. The child kindled a torch at once ; and the old man hurried with it to the fields, where hundreds of rice-stacks, representing most of his invested capital, stood awaiting transportation. Approaching those nearest the verge of the slope, he began to apply the torch to them,—burrying from one to another as quickly as his aged limbs could carry him. The sun-dried stalks caught like tinder ; the strengthening sea-breeze blew the blaze landward ; and presently, rank behind rank, the stacks burst into flame, sending skyward columns of smoke that met and mingled into one enormous cloudy whirl. Tada, astonished and terrified, ran after his grandfather, crying,—

‘ Ojiisan ! why ? Ojiisan ! why ?—why ?’

But Hamaguchi did not answer: he had no time to explain; he was thinking only of the four hundred lives in peril. For a while the child stared wildly at the blazing rice; then burst into tears, and ran back to the house, feeling sure that his grandfather had gone mad. Hamaguchi went on firing stack after stack, till he had reached the limit of his field; then he threw down his torch, and waited. The acolyte of the hill-temple, observing the blaze, set the big bell booming; and the people responded to the double appeal. Hamaguchi watched them hurrying in from the sands and over the beach and up from the village like a swarming of ants, and, to his anxious eyes, scarcely faster; for the moments seemed terribly long to him. The sun was going down; the wrinkled bed of the bay, and a vast sallow speckled expanse beyond it, lay naked to the last orange glow; and still the sea was fleeing toward the horizon.

Really, however, Hamaguchi did not have very long to wait before the first party of succour arrived,—a score of agile young peasants, who wanted to attack the fire at once. But the Chōja, holding out both arms, stopped them.

‘Let it burn, lads!’ he commanded,—‘let it be! I want the whole *mura* here. There is a great danger,—*taihen da!*’



The whole village was coming ; and Hamaguchi counted. All the young men and boys were soon on the spot, and not a few of the more active women and girls ; then came most of the older folk, and mothers with babies at their backs, and even children,—for children could help to pass water ; and the elders too feeble to keep up with the first rush could be seen well on their way up the steep ascent. The growing multitude, still knowing nothing, looked alternately, in sorrowful wonder, at the flaming fields and at the impassive face of their Chōja. And the sun went down.

‘ Grandfather is mad,—I am afraid of him !’ sobbed Tada, in answer to a number of questions. ‘ He is mad. He set fire to the rice on purpose : I saw him do it !’

‘ As for the rice,’ cried Hamaguchi, ‘ the child tells the truth. I set fire to the rice. . . . Are all the people here ?’

The Kumi-chō and the heads of families looked about them, and down the hill, and made reply : ‘ All are here, or very soon will be . . . We cannot understand this thing.’

‘ *Kita !*’ shouted the old man at the top of his voice, pointing to the open. ‘ Say now if I be mad !’

Through the twilight eastward all looked, and saw at the edge of the dusky horizon a long, lean, dim line like the shadowing of a coast where no coast ever was,—a line that thickened as they gazed, that broadened as a coast-line broadens to the eyes of one approaching it, yet incomparably more quickly. For that long darkness was the returning sea, towering like a cliff, and coursing more swiftly than the kite flies.

‘*Tsunami!*’ shrieked the people ; and then all shrieks and all sounds and all power to hear sounds were annihilated by a nameless shock heavier than any thunder, as the colossal swell smote the shore with a weight that sent a shudder through the hills, and with a foam-burst like a blaze of sheet lightning. Then for an instant nothing was visible but a storm of spray rushing up the slope like a cloud ; and the people scattered back in panic from the mere menace of it. When they looked again, they saw a white horror of sea raving over the place of their homes. It drew back roaring, and tearing out the bowels of the land as it went. Twice, thrice, five times the sea struck and ebbed, but each time with lesser surges : then it returned to its ancient bed and stayed,—still raging, as after a typhoon.

On the plateau for a time there was no word



spoken. All stared speechlessly at the desolation beneath,—the ghastliness of hurled rock and naked riven cliff, the bewilderment of scooped-up deep-sea wrack and shingle shot over the empty site of dwelling and temple. The village was not ; the greater part of the fields were not ; even the terraces had ceased to exist ; and of all the homes that had been about the bay there remained nothing recognisable except two straw-roofs tossing madly in the offing. The after-terror of the death escaped and the stupefaction of the general loss kept all lips dumb, until the voice of Hamaguchi was heard again, observing gently,—

'That was why I set fire to the rice.'

He, their Chōja, now stood among them almost as poor as the poorest ; for his wealth was gone—but he had saved four hundred lives by the sacrifice. Little Tada ran to him, and caught his hand, and asked forgiveness for having said naughty things. Whereupon the people woke up to the knowledge of why they were alive, and began to wonder at the simple, unselfish foresight that had saved them ; and the headmen prostrated themselves in the dust before Hamaguchi Gohei, and the people after them.

Then the old man wept a little, partly be-

cause he was happy, and partly because he was aged and weak and had been sorely tried.

' My house remains,' he said, as soon as he could find words, automatically caressing Tada's brown cheeks ; ' and there is room for many. Also the temple on the hill stands ; and there is shelter there for the others.'

Then he led the way to his house ; and the people cried and shouted.

The period of distress was long, because in those days there were no means of quick communication between district and district, and the help needed had to be sent from far away. But when better times came, the people did not forget their debt to Hamaguchi Gohei. They could not make him rich ; nor would he have suffered them to do so, even had it been possible. Moreover, gifts could never have sufficed as an expression of their reverential feeling towards him ; for they believed that the ghost within him was divine. So they declared him a god, and thereafter called him Hamaguchi Daimyōjin thinking they could give him no greater honour ;—and truly no greater honour in any country could be given to mortal man. And when they rebuilt the village, they built a temple to the spirit of him, and fixed above the front of it a tablet bearing his name in



Chinese text of gold ; and they worshipped him there, with prayer and with offerings. How he felt about it I cannot say ;—I know only that he continued to live in his old thatched home upon the hill, with his children and his children's children, just as humanly and simply as before, while his soul was being worshipped in the shrine below. A hundred years and more he has been dead ; but his temple, they tell me, still stands, and the people still pray to the ghost of the good old farmer to help them in time of fear or trouble.

Lafcadio Hearn.



NAPOLEON'S EARLY LIFE

As we think of Napoleon Bonaparte what a world of visions and memories rises before the mind ! Who does not know the outward form of the greatest conqueror and captain of modern times: the small, almost dwarfish, figure, the rounded symmetry of the head, the pale olive cheek and massive brow, the nose and lips carved as it were from the purest marble of the antique world, and above all the deep-set eyes of lustrous grey, now flashing with electric fires, now veiled in impenetrable contemplation ? The set of his figure is familiar too, as are the clothes in which it has been the delight of painters to portray him. We know the compact energy of his chest and shoulders, the flashing impetuosity of each gesture and movement, the white teeth and delicate hands, and the little cocked hat and long coat of grey in which he was used to ride to victory. Who has not seen him in print and picture, the gaunt young hero of the Republic charging with the flag at Arcola, the Emperor kneeling before the altar of Notre Dame in the long and sumptuous robes of his coronation, the grim



leader of a haggard cavalcade treading the deadly snows of a Russian winter, the cloaked figure upon a ship's deck with huddled shoulders and sunken chin and a far-off look of tragedy in his set and melancholy gaze? And the thoughts and feelings which glow into consciousness at the sound of this illustrious name are every whit as varied and chequered as the outward events of his life seen through the imagination of the painter. Perhaps in the whole range of history no one has aroused emotions so opposite and so intense, or within his own lifetime has claimed so much of the admiration, the fear, and the hatred of mankind. Even the colder critics of posterity view his course not only with mixed and blended judgments, but with a kind of bewilderment at the union in one life and character of so much grandeur and roguery, gold and alloy. For those to whom psychological analysis is wearisome he stands simply as the miraculous man of action, who without assistance of wealth or station mounted to the highest pinnacle of human fortune, supplying by the weight of one transcendent example a conclusive answer to the theory that the art and mystery of politics is an esoteric thing, a perquisite of pedigrees and privilege. The man of whom Madame de Staël said, that "of all the inheri-

tance of his terrible power there remained only to the human race the deadly knowledge of some further secrets in the art of tyranny," is also the child of the Revolution, the most dazzling proof of his own democratic doctrine that in every society a career should be open to talent. And so long as men go to the past for the pathos and romance of great vicissitudes of fortune, or for the serious interest of feats of statesmanship, or for documents of human power and resolve, or for the more elusive secrets of the passionate temperament, or else that they may win an insight into the human forces which move the world, they will continue to study the life of Napoleon, and to find in it at the very least a story as wonderful as those of the giants and fairies, and at the most the greatest explosion of human energy which in modern times has altered the politics of civilised man.

He was born at Ajaccio on August 15, 1769, the second son of Charles-Marie Bonaparte and Marie-Letizia Ramolino. His paternal stem drew its root from Florence (branches of it have been traced at Sarzana and San Miniato in Tuscany), but ever since 1529 the ancestors of Napoleon had been settled in Corsica. Here in this lovely scene of rugged mountains and dark



chestnut forests and azure spaces of sky and sea the Bonapartes flourished in the esteem of their simple neighbours. Proud of its patrician origin, the family, though far from wealthy, was by the standard of the rude and primitive society reckoned to be the most prosperous in Ajaccio. Five Bonapartes served at different times on the island council. But the evidence of ancestral ability is stronger on the maternal than on the father's side. The father of Napoleon was handsome, intelligent, with a not uncommon Italian turn for poetry and rhetoric, but extravagant and restless, constantly embarrassed for money, and driven to every kind of ingenious solicitation and shift to obtain it. His mother Letizia was a woman in a thousand. Far into old age she retained the beauty of face and dignity of carriage which were hers by right of nature and which would have won her admiration in any company in the world. Her mind was plain and unfurnished. To the end of her life she could neither pronounce nor speak the French language without ridiculous mistakes and her economies were carried to the point of avarice ; but her character was solid as a rock of granite, and as she had faced adversity with courage, so she was neither changed nor spoiled by the marvellous revolution

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in her fortunes. In 1793 Paoli addressed her as Cornelia, meaning that this shrewd, resolute and beautiful country-woman was fit to bear a progeny of heroes.

In the middle of the eighteenth century it was a title of honour to be a native of Corsica. Every lover of liberty had followed with sympathy the gallant struggle which the inhabitants of that small and freedom-loving island had waged, first against the odious rule of Genoa, and then against the powerful monarchy of France. The name of Pasquale Paoli, the hero of the War of Independence, the leader and law-giver of his people, was famous in every capital in Europe, and the characteristics of a country so remote, and apparently by reason of that remoteness retaining the large and simple heroism of classical times, were matter for the curiosity of travellers and politicians. Europe thought of Corsica then, as she has thought since of Greece struggling against the Turk, or of the Boer Republics of South Africa as they contested the collected might of the British Empire. And the youth of Napoleon, born in the very year in which Corsica finally passed under the dominion of France, was filled with the reverberation of that island epic. Stories of the strokes and hazards of the patriotic war must have



been everywhere around him. He learned to know how his father had drafted a proclamation to the Corsican people, and how just before his birth his mother was driven out into the woods and mountains to share the perils of the patriot army. The star of his youth was Paoli. His dream was, now to write the history of his island, now to effect its liberation from the French.

The Corsican bore a character for sobriety, courage and hardihood. Hate was for him a virtue, vengeance a duty, pardon an infamy. He felt the call of the clan like a Highlander, an Albanian, or a Zulu, and was full of the pride and self-assurance common to gallant men who have never met a superior. Vigilant and astute in his judgment of character, he was a master of dissimulation save where passion broke in and spoiled the reckoning. His standard of honour forbade theft, enjoined hospitality and tolerated woman as the drudge of the household and the field. In general his deportment was noted as grave and stoical. He was sparing of amusement, would sit at cards without a word and suffer torture without a cry ; but when the seal of silence was once broken, language would stream from him like a torrent, an index of that uneasy, impatient,

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quarrelsome energy which was a common attribute of the race. In these and other particulars of temperament Napoleon Bonaparte was a true Corsican.

The main part of Napoleon's education was conducted not in Corsica but in France. For seven years and nine months he never set eyes upon his home or upon his mother. When he left Ajaccio on December 15, 1778, to embark on the study of the French language at Autun, he was a child of nine, when he returned upon leave in September, 1786, he was seventeen years old and a sub-lieutenant in a regiment of artillery. Yet absence had rather quickened than dimmed the fervour of his patriotism. As a schoolboy at Brienne, and again at the military school in Paris, he felt himself an exile in an enemy's country, using a foreign tongue and compelled to associate with boys who despised him for his alien accent, his lean purse, and his lack of influential connections. The sense of isolation drove him inwards on himself. As a little child he had been quarrelsome and turbulent ; he was now taciturn, morose, unpopular with his fellows, "dry as parchment," in his own words, but secretly tormented by the flames of ambition. Linguistic capacity he never possessed, but from childhood he had shown



an aptitude and taste for mathematics which was further developed by his French instructors. His father had originally designed him for the navy, but the project was changed, perhaps at the boy's desire, before the five years' course at Brienne was concluded, and it was decided that he should enter the artillery, being that branch of the profession of arms in which brains and industry might most easily balance the lack of outward advantages. He had given early proof of military tastes ; as he trotted down to his little school at Ajaccio he would exchange his breakfast of white bread for the coarse brown rations of the barrack, saying that he must prepare to lead the life of a soldier.

The evidence with regard to his intellectual and moral development at this period of life, though not abundant, is decisive in quality. His letters written from school are serious, lucid and practical. At fourteen he summed up the character of his elder brother Joseph, and decided that being too frivolous for the army, he should certainly be sent into the Church. At fifteen and a half, learning of the death of his father, he wrote with a precocious sense of civic service : " Our country has lost a keen, enlightened and honest citizen. It was so decreed by the Supreme

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Being.'" We are tempted to ask whether he was ever young. It is clear that even as a schoolboy he viewed the profession of arms, not as an occasion for brilliant spectacles, but as that branch of science, complete mastery of which, only to be achieved by devouring industry, was the secret of political greatness. History and geography were his absorbing passions. He would imagine himself one of Plutarch's heroes, and he found his first incitement to ambition in that famous *Discourse upon Universal History* in which Bossuet unrolls the succession of the Empires.

On October 28, 1785, Napoleon left the military school in Paris to join the artillery regiment of La Fère which was quartered at Valence. He was then a youth of sixteen years, poor, friendless, destitute of any kind of influence likely to promote his fortunes in the army. His father was dead, and Marboeuf and Boucheporn, the French officials in Corsica who had hitherto forwarded the interests of the family, were dead also. His mother was in great straits for money, and his own pay as sub-lieutenant amounted to seventeen-and-sixpence a week. In the normal course of events six years would elapse before he became a full lieutenant, twelve years before he



became a captain ; in middle life he might find himself retired on half-pay with hardly enough to keep body and soul together. The grey horizon only steeled his character. Frugality was his second nature, and with no opportunities for vulgar dissipation he plunged the deeper into the world of study. "Even when I had nothing to do," he confessed afterwards, "I vaguely thought that I had no time to lose."

There was at that time in France a body of prose literature more certain and magisterial in its direction, more seductive in its rich combination of hopefulness, sentiment and wit, and therefore more cogent in its sway over the generous impulses of youth, than any which Europe had yet known. The French philosophers of the eighteenth century preached the doctrines of reason and humanity to a country swiftly rising to a consciousness that the institutions under which it lived were the relics of a barbarous and superstitious age. They attacked every part of the existing order of society, invoking the widest principles, asking the gravest questions, and exhibiting, as against the darkness and confusion of the present, the dazzling vision of a world governed by the simple rules of rational arithmetic. To this literature of humanism and revolt



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men of every type and temperament contributed their quota : Voltaire his easy learning and nimble wit, Turgot his grave and philosophic statesmanship, Raynal his gift of angry declamation, Rousseau an incomparable facility for translating into musical French the confessions of a sensitive nature and the ideals of a logical mind. To an impecunious sub-lieutenant of artillery, not wholly absorbed in the technical study of his craft, contact with writers such as these was a liberal education, and in his lonely garret Bonaparte devoured the writings of the philosophers. At seventeen he was a passionate admirer of Rousseau and of Raynal, and attuned, if not to expect, at least to welcome, a political revolution in France.

During his first seven years in the army Napoleon enjoyed large and fruitful opportunities for reading. His military duties were light, his furloughs frequent and prolonged, and he had that exquisite passion for acquisition which comes once only with the first unfolding of intellectual power. "I have no resources here but work," he wrote to his mother in 1783. "I sleep very little since my illness. I go to bed at ten, I rise at four, I have only one meal a day, at three o'clock." From the philosophers he learnt to



despise monks, to hate kings and to disbelieve in the doctrines of the Christian religion ; but philosophy was neither his most congenial study nor the true formative influence in his life. His mind was of the positive, not of the metaphysical order. He revelled in facts and figures, analysing in detail books of history, geography and travel, that he might understand the political conditions of the world in which he lived. His early copy-books show how painstaking he could be in the tedious drudgery of accumulation. Yet the appetite for the concrete coexisted with spiritual sensibilities of a different order, not only with those which specially belong to youth, such as the delighted acquiescence in vague ideas and indefinite emotions, but with others more purposive and ministerial to action. Romantic dreams of greatness, passionately imagined, mingled with the striving to be literal, to be free from clouds and to see men and things through plain glass. Ossian and Werther touched him with a sense of the illimitable ; Corneille and Racine by their finished portraits of civic greatness. In history he found not only an encyclopædia of important facts, but "the base of the moral sciences, the torch of truth, the destroyer of prejudice." Though he practised his pen on essays and nove-

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lettes, his principal ambition was to be the historian of his native land, to exhibit the tyranny against which she had heroically struggled and of which she was still the reluctant victim. In 1787 he began to compose some Letters on Corsica, and later on made collections at Ajaccio for an elaborate history of the island.

The Revolution which broke out in the spring of 1789 opened sudden and indefinite prospects of advancement to all the poor and disinherited in France. Bonaparte's thoughts flew to Corsica ; he would help to free his countrymen from the odious yoke of the French bureaucracy. In September 1789 he obtained a furlough, and with his elder brother Joseph plunged into the whirlpool of the Corsican revolution. He declaimed in the clubs, composed hot revolutionary addresses and helped to organise a national guard. At Ajaccio, a town of fisher-folk, he was the soul of the opposition to the priests and aristocrats. In 1790 he succeeded, by means even then judged to be unscrupulous, in securing his election as second in command of a battalion of Corsican volunteers, an appointment not held to be incompatible with his French commission, and giving him an insight into the leadership and discipline of irregular troops. Meanwhile his view of the political



situation was altered by the abolition (November 30, 1789) of crown colony government in Corsica, and by the recognition of the island as a department of the new democratic monarchy of France. From that moment, though his interests were still mainly Corsican, his aversion for France was diminished. The Revolutionary Assembly had acknowledged the merits of his countrymen, had permitted Paoli to return, and had arranged for the due representation of Corsica in the parliamentary system to be created in France. But Napoleon was not destined to be ruler of the goatherds and shepherds of his native hills. As war broke out upon the Continent and as the government in Paris passed more and more under Jacobin dominion Paoli, himself a constitutional monarchist, who had owed much to English hospitality, fell under suspicion as a moderate, an Anglophile and a traitor. An expedition to Maddalena, a little island off the coast of Sardinia, miscarried owing to a naval mutiny ; but in the opinion of some the failure was due to a luke-warmness shading into treachery on the part of the Dictator of Corsica. Lucien Bonaparte, then a fiery young democrat of eighteen summers, having failed to become Paoli's secretary, discovered that he was a traitor, and informed the

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Jacobins of Toulon that the national hero of Corsica was fit for the guillotine. The Government in Paris accepted without examination the idle word of a young incendiary, decreed (April 2, 1793) Paoli's arrest, and ordered the three Commissioners of the Convention who were at Bastia to effect it. The news of this insult to a man who, for more than a generation, had been regarded as the father of his country, set all Corsica in flame ; and surrounded by his faithful herdsmen the old General in his mountain fortress at Corte defied the French Government to do its worst. The island was upon the point of civil war, and the position of the Bonapartes, fatally compromised by the rash action of Lucien and surrounded by the fervent Paolists of Ajaccio, became at once extremely critical.

Napoleon had by this time outgrown his early enthusiasm for the French Revolution. He had passed the summer of 1792 in Paris, had watched the invasion of the Tuilleries on June 20, and the massacre of the Swiss guards on August 10. His sense of soldierly discipline was outraged by the spectacle of a mob running riot, and of a regular force hacked to pieces for the want of a prompt and regular leader. "What cowards ! " he exclaimed to his friend Bourrienne, as the crowd



streamed into the royal palace on June 20: "How could they let in this rabble? Why don't they sweep off four or five hundred of them with the cannon? The rest would scamper home fast enough." In the midst of the revolting slaughter of August 10 he went down into the Tuileries gardens, and with the superb phrase, "Man of the South, let us save this unfortunate," stayed a Marseillais at his butcher's work. Such scenes as these cured him of his last ideal illusions. He wrote home that the Jacobins were lunatics, that the wheel of State was turned by a pack of vile intriguers, and that the people, viewed at close quarters, was unworthy of the efforts expended in courting its favour. From the distractions and fever of the Terror he found a refuge in "the sublime science" of astronomy.

Returning to Corsica in the autumn with a captain's rank, Napoleon learned that his family stood in the shade of Paoli's displeasure. The uncrowned King of Corsica had done nothing to help, and therefore had done much to hinder, the candidature of Joseph for the French Convention. He was in truth a Republican of the old school, doubtful of these Jacobinical young Bonapartes, who were in league with suspected or declared enemies. Nevertheless Napoleon continued to

cultivate relations with the man who still claimed the allegiance of the better part of the island. He commanded the artillery in the unfortunate expedition to Maddalena, and when the news came to Ajaccio that the arrest of Paoli was decreed, he composed an address to the Convention, protesting in warm and generous terms against so flagrant an injustice to a great and honourable patriot. But the struggle which had now begun in Corsica was too fierce to be assuaged by a pamphlet, however vigorous. The Bonapartes were known to be friends of Salicetti, the French commissioner at Bastia, and were therefore counted as the foes of Paoli ; and Lucien's crowning act of insolence, becoming bruited at Corte, precluded any chance of reconciliation. It came to an open and unequal war. How Napoleon was taken by the Paolists in the mountain village of Bocognano ; how he escaped down the long valley to a place of hiding in Ajaccio, and thence again by sea to the north ; how, soon after, his mother was waked up at midnight and with four children safely drawn from the angry town to the lovely olive groves of Milelli, and thence upon news of Paolist bands across the fragrant hills to the tower of Capitello on the gulf ; how the Paolists wreaked their vengeance on the offending clan, pillaging or burning six



Bonaparte houses, two gardens and a mill ; and how, finally, after many escapes and wanderings, a boat sailed from Calvi harbour on June 10, 1793, carrying Napoleon and his family away from their native shores and three days later landed the homeless fugitives at Toulon—all this may be found in many books, or may be still learned from the lips of hillmen among the granite homesteads of Corsica.

That summer marked a crisis in the destiny of France. The royalists were up in arms in the West, the Girondins in Normandy, Bordeaux, Marseilles. A serious revolt broke out in Lyons. The Allies recovered Belgium, drove the French from their capital frontier posts, Condé, Mainz, Valenciennes, and threatened an advance into the heart of the country. On August 28, 1793, Toulon, the great military port in the Mediterranean received a British fleet and hoisted the flag of Louis XVII. At no time was the unity of France or the preservation of the republican government so gravely imperilled. For honest and moderate men the course of duty was by no means clear, for on the one side was a government stained by regicide and the excesses of martial law, on the other the white flag of reaction and the advancing insult of foreign conquest.

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Napoleon had no difficulty in making his election. Meantime as he thought of Paris politicians he stood for the government of the day, and in an able dialogue, the *Souper de Beaucaire*, argued against the Girondins of Marseilles that the cause of the Mountain was the cause of France. Soon afterwards, on September 16, 1793, at the request of his Corsican friend Salicetti he joined the republican army before Toulon as commander of artillery ; and it was here that his quality as a soldier was first decisively shown. He saw, as none had seen before him, that the problem of the siege was to dislodge the British fleet from the inner harbour, and that the key to victory was the fort L'Eguillette on the extreme tip of the western promontory of Caire. Three months of untiring energy and fearless courage were crowned with complete success. On December 19, 1793, the troops of the Convention entered Toulon, and the horrors of the siege were soon forgotten in the disgrace of the reprisals. To the young officer who had helped to procure this brilliant and well-timed victory the government of Robespierre owed a debt of gratitude. He was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, and in the spring of 1794 dispatched at his own suggestion to Genoa nominally to negotiate for provisions, in reality



to explore the ground with a view to hostilities. But in those days the life of a republican general, however loyal and eminent, was at the mercy of any random slander or base intrigue. Bonaparte, as the friend of the younger Robespierre and the emissary of the Terrorist government, became involved in suspicion after the revolution of Thermidor. Returning from Genoa with a mind stored with geographical knowledge, he was accused of being the plan-maker of the fallen tyrant, deprived of his military rank, and on August 12, 1794, thrown into prison at Fort Carré, near Antibes.

There was nothing compromising in his papers. He had in truth studiously avoided over-close relations with the dead dictator. When Maximilien Robespierre offered him a military command in Paris, he wisely refused it, reckoning that no head could be safe in such a city, nor could laurels be won there yet. His prudence was rewarded. On August 20, he was released, and soon afterwards restored to his rank. How essential were his talents was proved on September 21 at Dego, when an Austrian force attempting to cut the French communications with Genoa was routed, largely owing to the skilful dispositions of the general of artillery.

His heart thenceforward was set upon the Italian command. He knew the ground and had thought out a plan by which a vigorous offensive in Italy might shatter the left wing of the continental coalition. But the Government cried a halt on the Riviera, and then summoned Napoleon to join the Army of the West as an infantry brigadier. Here he would be engaged as an officer in an army not his own, in a civil war at once desperate and inglorious, against irregular bands of royalist nobles and peasantry. He came to Paris and boldly refused to go, under pretext of illness and reckoning upon the favour of Barras and Fréron, leaders of the dominant party who had seen and duly appreciated his work outside Toulon. For a time success crowned his resolution. He was consulted by the military committee of the Government, and drew up a new plan of campaign in Italy which was accepted and forwarded to the front. Then, by the retirement of Doulcet Pontecoulant, his patron and friend in official quarters, he was left unsheltered. The War Office awoke to his contumacy, and on September 15, 1795, just as he was expecting to be dispatched to Constantinople to organise the artillery of the Sultan, removed his name from the list of generals.

At this crisis of his fortunes Napoleon was saved by the lucky accident of an insurrection in Paris. The Convention, odious on many just accounts not only to the whole royalist connection, but to all men of moderate opinions, had excited a storm of indignation by decreeing that two-thirds of its members were to sit in the Legislative Assembly established under the new Directorial Constitution. Plain men argued that such a provision exhibited the hollowness of arrangements professedly contrived to conclude the Terror and to give to France an orderly and respectable government. What, they asked, was the use of the new constitution, with its Directory of Five, its Council of Ancients, its Council of Five Hundred, its wise and reassuring precautions against mob rule, if the ship of State was still to be steered by the old gang who had endured the September massacres, killed the King and the Queen, turned Paris into a slaughter-house, and given a recent exhibition of its clemency by doing the Dauphin to death in the Temple prison? The National Guard, some 30,000 strong, determined to wreak vengeance upon the body which had passed the odious "Law of the Two-Thirds;" and as the Convention had but 5,000 troops under its control, the situation of the Government was gravely imperilled.

From this almost desperate position the Convention was saved on the afternoon of October 5, 1795, by the guns of General Bonaparte. He had obtained an appointment through the friendship and esteem of Barras, who on the previous evening had been placed in command of the Paris troops, and since Barras was no soldier, the brunt of the defence was borne by Napoleon. "His activity," says Thiébault, "was astonishing: he seemed to be everywhere at once; he surprised people by his laconic, clear and prompt orders; everybody was struck by the vigour of his arrangements, and passed from admiration to confidence and from confidence to enthusiasm." In street-fighting success depends upon artillery, and when Murat galloped in with the guns from the Place des Sablons the victory of the Convention was half secured. As the heads of the insurgents marched from the Church of St. Roch upon the Tuileries they were shot away by a well-directed cannonade; and after a brief struggle, and only at the cost of some 200 lives, the day was won. Had the issue been otherwise, we cannot doubt but that France would have been overwhelmed by a fresh wave of anarchy and civil war. However tarnished its credentials, however discreditable its most recent phase of policy, the Convention was at least as-



honest in purpose as many of its assailants, and more truly representative of the substantial interests of France. It stood at least for three things, all of which would have been endangered by its overthrow in Vendémiaire; for the revolutionary settlement, for the unity of the nation, and for the defence of the frontiers against foreign arms. Napoleon was rewarded by the command of the Army of the Interior. In saving the Convention he had preserved for France not only a social order grounded on equality, but a regicide government committed to war.

Herbert Fisher.



THE JAM SAHIB OF NAWANAGAR

The last ball has been bowled, the bats have been oiled and put away, and around Lord's the grand stands are deserted and forlorn. We have said farewell to cricket. We have said farewell, too, to cricket's king. The game will come again with the spring and the new grass and the burgeoning trees. But the king will come no more. For the Jam Sahib is forty, and, alas, the Jam Sahib is fat. And the temple bells are calling him back to his princely duties amid the sunshine, and the palm trees, and spicy garlic smells of Nawanagar. No more shall we see him tripping down the pavilion steps, his face wreathed in chubby smiles ; no more shall we sit in the jolly sunshine through the livelong day and watch his incomparable art till the evening shadows fall athwart the greensward and send us home content. The well-graced actor leaves the stage and becomes only a memory in a world of happy memories. And so "hats off" to the Jam Sahib—the prince of a little State, but the king of a great game.

There have been kings before him to whom we have joyfully bowed the knee. There was he



of the great black beard who first captured our idolatry in the far-off days when the Three Graces arose in the West.

What a Vulcan the man looked ! What a genius he had for the game ! "I put the ball where I like," said Carpenter after bowling to him, "and then he—well, he puts it where *he* likes." And F. R. Spofforth—who can forget those thrilling days in the 'seventies when he came like a scourge from afar and swept British cricket before him ? What a revelation he was of pace and passion. How stealthy his approach, how astonishing his leap into the air, how terrific the bolt he sped ! And Lohmann of the many gifts, so easy, so various, so fresh and original. And Johnny Briggs, that incomparable comedian. What duels of cunning and resource have we seen between him and Abel in the old days at the Oval. And A. G. Steel—do you remember that 148 against Australia at Lord's in the early 'eighties ? Grace had failed, and Lucas had failed and the day was dark for England. Then, supported by dear Richard Barlow, Steel slowly retrieved the game, broke the bowling, captured it, smote it. Thrice in succession he drove—was it not the great George Giffen himself ?—into the crowd, and with each stroke the temperature rose higher..



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and the ring was a vision of waving hats and handkerchiefs, and the sound was like the breaking of a great sea on a ringing shore. I think we must have been more intense in those days. Perhaps it is that we were younger.

Yes, there were giants before the Jam Sahib. And yet I think it is undeniable that as a batsman the Indian will live as the supreme exponent of the Englishman's game. The claim does not rest simply on his achievements, although, judged by them, the claim could be sustained. His season's average of 87 with a total of over 3,000 runs, is easily the high-water mark of English cricket. Thrice he has totalled over 3,000 runs, and no one else has equalled that record. And is not his the astonishing achievement of scoring two double centuries in a single match on a single day—not against a feeble attack, but against Yorkshire, always the most resolute and resourceful of bowling teams ?

But we do not judge a cricketer so much by the runs he gets as by the way he gets them. "In literature as in finance," says Washington Irving, "much paper and much poverty may co-exist." And in cricket, too, many runs and much dullness may be associated. If cricket is menaced with creeping paralysis, it is because it is losing



the spirit of joyous adventure and becoming a mere instrument for compiling tables of averages. There are dull, mechanic fellows who turn out runs with as little emotion as a machine turns out pins. To watch them playing is as deadly an infliction as it was to see Peall making his interminable breaks with the spot-stroke. There is no colour, no enthusiasm, no character in their play. Cricket is not an adventure to them ; it is a business. It was so with Shrewsbury. His technical perfection was astonishing ; but the soul of the game was wanting in him. There was no sunshine in his play, no swift surprise or splendid unselfishness. And without these things, without gaiety, daring, and the spirit of sacrifice cricket is a dead thing. Now, the Jam Sahib has the root of the matter in him. His play is as sunny as his face. He is not a miser hoarding up runs, but a millionaire spending them, with a splendid yet judicious prodigality. It is as though his pockets are bursting with runs that he wants to shower with his blessings upon the expectant multitude. It is not difficult to believe that in his little kingdom of Nawanagar, where he has the power of life and death in his hands, he is extremely popular, for it is obvious that his pleasure is in giving pleasure.

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In the quality of his play he is unlike anything that has been seen on the cricket field, certainly in our time. There is extraordinarily little display in his methods. He combines an Oriental calm with an Oriental swiftness—the stillness of the panther with the suddenness of its spring. He has none of the fine flourishes of our own stylists, but a quite startling economy of action. The normal batsman, obeying a natural impulse, gets into motion as the bowler starts his run. He keeps pace as it were with his foe, and his movements are a crescendo culminating in a crisis. At the end of the stroke the bat has described a circle, the feet are displaced, the original attitude has been lost in a whirl of motion. It may be an ordered whirl, conventional and academic as in the case of Hayward, who has all the correctness, monotony and efficiency of a book of rules, and like a book of rules sends one to sleep. Or it may be a whirl of fine frenzy like that of John Tyldesley, who is a glorious empiric, and who plays as though he had never heard of a rule, but meets every situation with a swift and dazzling inspiration. But in either case the whirl of bat and batsman is unfailing. The style of the Jam Sahib is entirely different. He stands moveless as the



bowler approaches the wicket. He remains moveless as the ball is delivered. It seems to be on him before he takes action. Then, without any preliminary flourish, the bat flashes to the ball, and the stroke is over. The body seems never to have changed its position, the feet apparently unmoved, the bat is as before. Nothing has happened except that one sudden flash—swift, perfectly timed, indisputable

*" Like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say it lightens."*

If the supreme art is to achieve the maximum result with minimum expenditure of effort, the Jam Sahib, as a batsman, is in a class by himself. We have no one to challenge with our coarser methods that curious refinement of style, which seems to have reduced action to its barest terms. It is the art of the great etcher who with a line reveals infinity. It is the art of the great dramatist who with a significant word shakes the soul. Schiller, said Coleridge, burns a city to create his effect of terror; Shakespeare drops a handkerchief and freezes our blood. The typical batsman performs a series of intricate evolutions in playing the ball; the Jam Sahib flicks his wrist and the ball bounds

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to the ropes. It is not jugglery, or magic: it is simply the perfect economy of means to an end. His batting may be compared with the oratory of Mr. Asquith, who exercises the same thrift in the use of words as the Jam Sahib exercises in the use of action, and achieves the same completeness of effect. The Jam never uses an action too much ; Mr. Asquith never uses a word too many. Each is a model in that fine art of omission of unessentials, that concentration on the one thing that needs to be said or done.

It follows that in all sports in which success depends upon truth of eye and swiftness of action the Jam Sahib has won distinction. At lawn tennis he has in his time beaten Renshaw, and as a shot he takes rank among the most instant and deadly of his time.

Probably no cricketer has ever won so peculiar a place in the affections of the people. They loved him from the first for the novelty of the thing. It was as though a pet kitten had begun to talk Tariff Reform. Here was what the late Lord Salisbury would have called "a black man" playing cricket for all the world as if he were a white man. Then they realised that he did not play it as a white man, but as an artist of

another and a superior strain. And so they came to reflect, and to catch through this solitary figure in our midst some vision of that vast realm which we govern without knowing anything about it. It is the Jam Sahib's supreme service that, through his genius for the English game, he has familiarised the English people with the idea of the Indian as a man of like affections with ourselves, and with capacities beyond ours in directions supposed to be peculiarly our own. In a word, he is the first Indian who has touched the imagination of our people. He has released trains of thought in the common mind that cannot fail to influence beneficially the popular feeling in regard to the greatest task that belongs to us as a nation.

And if India had sought to make herself heard and understood by the people who control her from afar, she could not have found a more triumphant missionary than the Jam Sahib, with his smile and his bat. Great Indians come to us frequently, men of high scholarship, rare powers of speech, noble character—the Gokhales, the Bannerjees, the Tagores. They come and they go, unseen and unheard by the multitude. The Jam Sahib has brought the East into the heart of our happy holiday crowds, and has taught

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them to think of it as something human and kindly, and keenly responsive to the joys that appeal to us. In the narrower circle of those who know him his influence has not been less fruitful. He is as engaging with his tongue as with his bat, a lively raconteur, and a man of thoroughly democratic sympathies and serious purposes. It was he who first set himself to break down the practice of professionals and amateurs lunching separately, providing thus a curious commentary on our vague conceptions about caste. The castes of India have at least some basis in great traditions and fundamental ideas. The caste system of our own cricket field as of our own society has only a basis in riches. You cannot be a Runjit Singh—to give the Jam Sahib the true rendering of his much-abused name—unless you had the blood of the Lion race in your veins, but you may join the old nobility of England if you have made a brilliant speculation in rubber, or have exploited the oils of Baku or the gold of the Transvaal. Perhaps, after all, the Jam Sahib has more right to correct the caste traditions of our land than we have to deplore the caste system of his own.

He goes back to his own people—to the little



State that he recovered so romantically, and governs as a good Liberal should govern—and the holiday crowds will see him no more. But his name will live in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of British people, to whom he has given happy days and happy memories.

Alfred George Gardiner.



THE COUNTRY OF THE BLIND

Three hundred miles and more from Chimborazo, one hundred from the snows of Cotopaxi, in the wildest wastes of Ecuador's Andes there lies that mysterious mountain valley, cut off from the world of men, the Country of the Blind. Long years ago that valley lay so far open to the world that men might come at last through frightful gorges and over an icy pass into its equable meadows ; and thither indeed men came, a family or so of Peruvian half-breeds fleeing from the lust and tyranny of an evil Spanish ruler. Then came the stupendous outbreak of Mindobamba, when it was night in Quito for seventeen days and the water was boiling at Yaguachi and all the fish floating dying even as far as Guayaquil ; everywhere along the Pacific slopes there were land-slips and swift thawings and sudden floods, and one whole side of the old Arauca crest slipped and came down in thunder, and cut off the Country of the Blind for ever from the exploring feet of men. But one of these early settlers had chanced to be on the hither side of the gorges when the world had so terribly shaken itself, and he per-



force had to forget his wife and his child and all the friends and possessions he had left up there, and start life over again in the lower world. He started it again but ill, blindness overtook him, and he died of punishment in the mines ; but the story he told begot a legend that lingers along the length of the Cordilleras of the Andes to this day.

He told of his reason for venturing back from that fastness, into which he had first been carried lashed to a llama, beside a vast bale of gear, when he was a child. The valley, he said, had in it all that the heart of man could desire—sweet water, pasture, and even climate, slopes of rich brown soil with tangles of a shrub that bore an excellent fruit, and on one side great hanging forests of pine that held the avalanches high. Far overhead, on three sides, vast cliffs of grey-green rock were capped by cliffs of ice ; but the glacier stream came not to them but flowed away by the farther slopes, and only now and then huge ice masses fell on the valley side. In this valley it neither rained nor snowed, but the abundant springs gave a rich green pasture, that irrigation would spread over all the valley space. The settlers did well indeed there. Their beasts did well and multiplied, and but one thing marred their happiness. Yet it was enough to mar it greatly. A strange

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disease had come upon them, and had made all the children born to them there—and indeed, several older children also—blind. It was to seek some charm or antidote against this plague of blindness that he had with fatigue and danger and difficulty returned down the gorge. In those days, in such cases, men did not think of germs and infections but of sins ; and it seemed to him that the reason of this affliction must lie in the negligence of these priestless immigrants to set up a shrine so soon as they entered the valley. He wanted a shrine—a handsome, cheap, effectual shrine—to be erected in the valley ; he wanted relics and such-like potent things of faith, blessed objects and mysterious medals and prayers. In his wallet he had a bar of native silver for which he would not account ; he insisted there was none in the valley with something of the insistence of an inexpert liar. They had all clubbed their money and ornaments together, having little need for such treasure up there, he said, to buy them holy help against their ill. I figure this dim-eyed young mountaineer, sunburnt, gaunt, and anxious, hat-brim clutched feverishly, a man all unused to the ways of the lower world, telling this story to some keen-eyed, attentive priest before the great convulsion ; I can picture him presently



seeking to return with pious and infallible remedies against that trouble, and the infinite dismay with which he must have faced the tumbled vastness where the gorge had once come out. But the rest of his story of mischances is lost to me, save that I know of his evil death after several years. Poor stray from that remoteness ! The stream that had once made the gorge now bursts from the mouth of a rocky cave, and the legend his poor, ill-told story set going developed into the legend of a race of blind men somewhere "over there " one may still hear to-day.

And amidst the little population of that now isolated and forgotten valley the disease ran its course. The old became groping and purblind, the young saw but dimly, and the children that were born to them saw never at all. But life was very easy in that snow-rimmed basin, lost to all the world, with neither thorns nor briars, with no evil insects nor any beasts save the gentle breed of llamas they had lugged and thrust and followed up the beds of the shrunken rivers in the gorges up which they had come. The seeing had become purblind so gradually that they scarcely noted their loss. They guided the sightless youngsters hither and thither until they knew the whole valley marvellously, and when at last sight



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died out among them the race lived on. They had even time to adapt themselves to the blind control of fire, which they made carefully in stoves of stone. They were a simple strain of people at the first, unlettered, only slightly touched with the Spanish civilisation, but with something of a tradition of the arts of old Peru and of its lost philosophy. Generation followed generation. They forgot many things ; they devised many things. Their tradition of the greater world they came from became mythical in colour and uncertain. In all things save sight they were strong and able ; and presently the chance of birth and heredity sent one who had an original mind and who could talk and persuade among them, and then afterwards another. These two passed, leaving their effects, and the little community grew in numbers and in understanding, and met and settled social and economic problems that arose. Generation followed generation. Generation followed generation. There came a time when a child was born who was fifteen generations from that ancestor who went out of the valley with a bar of silver to seek God's aid, and who never returned. Thereabouts it chanced that a man came into this community from the outer world. And this is the story of that man.



He was a mountaineer from the country near Quito, a man who had been down to the sea and had seen the world, a reader of books in an original way, an acute and enterprising man, and he was taken on by a party of Englishmen who had come out to Ecuador to climb mountains, to replace one of their three Swiss guides who had fallen ill. He climbed here and he climbed there and then came the attempt on Parascotopetl, the Matterhorn of the Andes, in which he was lost to the outer world. The story of the accident has been written a dozen times. Pointer's narrative is the best. He tells how the party worked their difficult and almost vertical way up to the very foot of the last and greatest precipice, and how they built a night shelter amidst the snow upon a little shelf of rock, and, with a touch of real dramatic power, how presently they found Nunez had gone from them. They shouted, and there was no reply ; shouted and whistled, and for the rest of that night they slept no more.

As the morning broke they saw the traces of his fall. It seems impossible he could have uttered a sound. He had slipped eastward towards the unknown side of the mountain ; far below he had struck a steep slope of snow, and ploughed his way down it in the midst of a



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snow avalanche. His track went straight to the edge of a frightful precipice, and beyond that everything was hidden. Far, far below, and hazy with distance, they could see trees rising out of a narrow, shut-in valley—the lost Country of the Blind. But they did not know it was the lost Country of the Blind, nor distinguish it in any way from any other narrow streak of upland valley. Unnerved by this disaster, they abandoned their attempt in the afternoon, and Pointer was called away to the war before he could make another attack. To this day Parascotopetl lifts an unconquered crest, and Pointer's shelter crumbles unvisited amidst the snows.

And the man who fell survived.

At the end of the slope he fell a thousand feet, and came down in the midst of a cloud of snow upon a snow slope even steeper than the one above. Down this he was whirled, stunned and insensible, but without a bone broken in his body ; and then at last came to gentler slopes, and at last rolled out and lay still, buried amidst a softening heap of the white masses that had accompanied and saved him. He came to himself with a dim fancy that he was ill in bed ; then realised his position with a mountaineer's intelligence, and worked himself loose and, after a rest or so, out-



until he saw the stars. He rested flat upon his chest for a space, wondering where he was, and what had happened to him. He explored his limbs, and discovered that several of his buttons were gone and his coat turned over his head. His knife had gone from his pocket and his hat was lost, though he had tied it under his chin. He recalled that he had been looking for loose stones to raise his piece of the shelter wall. His ice-axe had disappeared.

He decided he must have fallen, and looked up to see, exaggerated by the ghastly light of the rising moon, the tremendous flight he had taken. For a while he lay, gazing blankly at that vast pale cliff towering above, rising moment by moment out of a subsiding tide of darkness. Its phantasmal, mysterious beauty held him for a space, and then he was seized with a paroxysm of sobbing laughter.

After a great interval of time he became aware that he was near the lower edge of the snow. Below, down what was now a moonlit and practicable slope, he saw the dark and broken appearance of rockstrewn turf. He struggled to his feet, aching in every joint and limb, got down painfully from the heaped loose snow about him, went downward until he was on the turf, and



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there dropped rather than lay beside a boulder, drank deep from the flask in his inner pocket, and instantly fell asleep.

He was awakened by the singing of birds in the trees far below.

He sat up and perceived he was on a little alp at the foot of a vast precipice, that was grooved by the gully down which he and his snow had come. Over against him another wall of rock reared itself against the sky. The gorge between these precipices ran east and west and was full of the morning sunlight, which lit to the westward the mass of fallen mountain that closed the descending gorge. Below him it seemed there was a precipice equally steep, but behind the snow in the gully he found a sort of chimney-cleft dripping with snow-water down which a desperate man might venture. He found it easier than it seemed, and came at last to another desolate alp, and then after a rock climb of no particular difficulty to a steep slope of trees. He took his bearings and turned his face up the gorge, for he saw it opened out above upon green meadows, among which he now glimpsed quite distinctly a cluster of stone huts of unfamiliar fashion. At times his progress was like clambering along the face of a wall, and after a time the



rising sun ceased to strike along the gorge, the voices of the singing birds died away, and the air grew cold and dark about him. But the distant valley with its houses was all the brighter for that. He came presently to talus, and among the rocks he noted—for he was an observant man—an unfamiliar fern that seemed to clutch out of the crevices with intense green hands. He picked a frond or so and gnawed its stalk and found it helpful.

About midday he came at last out of the throat of the gorge into the plain and the sunlight. He was stiff and weary ; he sat down in the shadow of a rock, filled up his flask with water from a spring and drank it down, and remained for a time resting before he went on to the houses.

They were very strange to his eyes, and indeed the whole aspect of that valley became, as he regarded it, queerer and more unfamiliar. The greater part of its surface was lush green meadow, starred with many beautiful flowers, irrigated with extraordinary care, and bearing evidence of systematic cropping piece by piece. High up and ringing the valley about was a wall, and what appeared to be a circumferential water-channel, from which the little trickles of water that fed the meadow plants came, and on the higher slopes

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above this, flocks of llamas cropped the scanty herbage. Sheds apparently shelters or feeding places for the llamas stood against the boundary wall here and there. The irrigation streams ran together into a main channel down the centre of the valley, and this was enclosed on either side by a wall breast high. This gave a singularly urban quality to this secluded place, a quality that was greatly enhanced by the fact that a number of paths paved with black and white stones, and each with a curious little kerb at the side, ran hither and thither in an orderly manner. The houses of the central village were quite unlike the casual and higgledy-piggledy agglomeration of the mountain villages he knew ; they stood in a continuous row on either side of a central street of astonishing cleanness ; here and there their parti-coloured facade was pierced by a door, and not a solitary window broke their even frontage. They were parti-coloured with extraordinary irregularity, smeared with a sort of plaster that was sometimes grey, sometimes drab, sometimes slate-coloured or dark brown ; and it was the sight of this wild plastering first brought the word "blind" into the thoughts of the explorer. "The good man who did that," he thought, "must have been as blind as a bat."



He descended a steep place, and so came to the wall and channel that ran about the valley, near where the latter spouted out its surplus contents into the deeps of the gorge in a thin and wavering thread of cascade. He could now see a number of men and women resting on piled heaps of grass, as if taking a siesta, in the remoter part of the meadow, and nearer the village a number of recumbent children, and then nearer at hand three men carrying pails on yokes along a little path that ran from the encircling wall towards the houses. These latter were clad in garments of llama cloth and boots and belts of leather, and they wore caps of cloth with back and ear flaps. They followed one another in single file, walking slowly and yawning as they walked, like men who have been up all night. There was something so reassuringly prosperous and respectable in their bearing that after a moment's hesitation Nunez stood forward as conspicuously as possible upon his rock, and gave vent to a mighty shout that echoed round the valley.

The three men stopped, and moved their heads as though they were looking about them. They turned their faces this way and that, and Nunez gesticulated with freedom. But they did not appear to see him for all his gestures, and after a

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time, directing themselves towards the mountains far away to the right, they shouted as if in answer. Nunez bawled again, and then once more, and as he gestured ineffectually, the word "blind" came up to the top of his thoughts. "The fools must be blind," he said.

When at last after much shouting and wrath, Nunez crossed the stream by a little bridge, came through a gate in the wall, and approached them, he was sure that they were blind. He was sure that this was the Country of the Blind of which the legends told. Conviction had sprung upon him, and a sense of great and rather enviable adventure. The three stood side by side, not looking at him, but with their ears directed towards him, judging him by his unfamiliar steps. They stood close together like men a little afraid, and he could see their eyelids closed and sunken, as though the very balls beneath had shrunk away. There was an expression near awe on their faces.

"A man," one said, in hardly recognisable Spanish—"a man it is—a man or a spirit—coming down from the rocks."

But Nunez advanced with the confident steps of a youth who enters upon life. All the old stories of the lost valley and the Country of the Blind had come back to his mind, and through his



thoughts ran this old proverb, as if it were a refrain—

"In the Country of the Blind the One-eyed Man is King."

"In the Country of the Blind the One-eyed man is King."

And very civilly he gave them greeting. He talked to them and used his eyes.

"Where does he come from, brother Pedro?" asked one.

"Down out of the rocks."

"Over the mountains I come," said Nunez, "out of the country beyond there—where men can see. From near Bogota, where there are a hundred thousands of people, and where the city passes out of sight."

"Sight?" muttered Pedro. "Sight?"

"He comes," said the second blind man, "out of the rocks."

The cloth of their coats Nunez saw was curiously fashioned, each with a different sort of stitching.

They startled him by a simultaneous movement towards him, each with a hand outstretched. He stepped back from the advance of these spread fingers.

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"Come hither," said the third blind man, following his motion and clutching him neatly.

And they held Nunez and felt him over, saying no word further until they had done so.

"Carefully," he cried, with a finger in his eye, and found they thought that organ, with its fluttering lids, a queer thing in him. They went over it again.

"A strange creature, Correa," said the one called Pedro. "Feel the coarseness of his hair. Like a llama's hair."

"Rough he is as the rocks that begot him," said Correa, investigating Nunez's unshaven chin with a soft and slightly moist hand. "Perhaps he will grow finer." Nunez struggled a little under their examination, but they gripped him firm.

"Carefully," he said again.

"He speaks," said the third man. Certainly he is a man."

"Ugh!" said Pedro, at the roughness of his coat.

"And you have come into the world?" asked Pedro.

"Out of the world. Over mountain and glaciers; right over above there, half-way to the sun. Out of the great big world that goes down twelve days' journey to the sea."



They scarcely seemed to heed him. "Our fathers have told us men may be made by the forces of Nature," said Correa. "It is the warmth of things and moisture, and rottenness—rotteness."

"Let us lead him to the elders," said Pedro.

"Shout first," said Correa, "lest the children be afraid. This is a marvellous occasion."

So they shouted, and Pedro went first and took Nunez by the hand to lead him to the houses.

He drew his hand away. "I can see," he said.

"See?" said Correa.

"Yes, see," said Nunez, turning towards him, and stumbled against Pedro's pail.

"His senses are still imperfect," said the third blind man. "He stumbles, and talks unmeaning words. Lead him by the hand."

"As you will," said Nunez, and was led along, laughing.

It seemed they knew nothing of sight.

Well, all in good time he would teach them.

He heard people shouting, and saw a number of figures gathering together in the middle roadway of the village.

He found it tax his nerve and patience more than he had anticipated, that first encounter

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with the population of the country of the Blind. The place seemed larger as he drew near to it, and the smeared plastering queerer, and a crowd of children and men and women (the women and girls, he was pleased to note, had some of them quite sweet faces, for all that their eyes were shut and sunken) came about him, holding on to him, touching him with soft sensitive hands, smelling at him, and listening at every word he spoke. Some of the maidens and children, however, kept aloof as if afraid, and indeed his voice seemed coarse and rude beside their softer notes. They mobbed him. His three guides kept close to him with an effect of proprietorship, and said again and again, "A wild man out of the rocks."

"Bogota," he said. "Bogota. Over the mountain crests."

"A wild man using wild words," said Pedro. "Did you hear that—Bogota? His mind is hardly formed yet. He has only the beginnings of speech."

A little boy nipped his hand. "Bogota!" he said mockingly, "Ay! A city to your village. I came from the great world—where men have eyes and see."

"His name's Bogota," they said.



"He stumbled," said Correa, "stumbled twice as we came hither."

"Bring him to the elders."

And they thrust him suddenly through a doorway into a room as black as pitch, save at the end there faintly glowed a fire. The crowd closed in behind him and shut out all but the faintest glimmer of day, and before he could arrest himself he had fallen headlong over the feet of a seated man. His arm, outflung, struck the face of some one else as he went down; he felt the soft impact of features and heard a cry of anger, and for a moment he struggled against a number of hands that clutched him. It was one-sided fight. An inkling of the situation came to him, and he lay quiet.

"I fell down," he said; "I couldn't see in this pitchy darkness."

There was a pause as if the unseen persons about him tried to understand his words. Then the voice of Correa said: "He is but newly formed. He stumbles as he walks and mingles words that mean nothing with his speech."

Others also said things about him that he heard or understood imperfectly.

"May I sit up?" he asked, in a pause. "I will not struggle against you again."

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They consulted and let him rise.

The voice of an older man began to question him, and Nunez found himself trying to explain the great world out of which he had fallen, and the sky and mountains and sight and such-like marvels, to these elders who sat in darkness in the Country of the Blind. And they would believe and understand nothing whatever he told them, a thing quite outside his expectation. They would not even understand many of his words. For fourteen generation these people had been blind and cut off from all the seeing world ; the names for all the things of sight had faded and changed ; the story of the outer world was faded and changed to a child's story ; and they had ceased to concern themselves with anything beyond the rocky slopes above their circling wall. Blind men of genius had arisen among them and questioned the shreds of belief and tradition they had brought with them from their seeing days, and had dismissed all these things as idle fancies, and replaced them with new and saner explanations. Much of their imagination had shrivelled with their eyes, and they had made for themselves new imaginations with their ever-more sensitive ears and finger-tips. Slowly Nunez realised this : that his expectation of



wonder and reverence at his origin and his gifts was not to be borne out ; and after his poor attempt to explain sight to them had been set aside as the confused version of a new-made being describing the marvels of his incoherent sensations, he subsided, a little dashed, into listening to their instruction. And the eldest of the blind men explained to him life and philosophy and religion, how that the world (meaning their valley) had been first an empty hollow in the rocks, and then had come, first, inanimate things without the gift of touch, and llamas and a few other creatures that had little sense, and then men, at last angels, whom one could hear singing and making fluttering sounds, but whom no one could touch at all, which puzzled Nunez greatly until he thought of the birds.

He went on to tell Nunez how this time had been divided into the warm and the cold, which are the blind equivalents of day and night, and how it was good to sleep in the warm and work during the cold, so that now, but for his advent, the whole town of the blind would have been asleep. He said Nunez must have been specially created to learn and serve the wisdom they had acquired, and for that all his mental incoherency and stumbling behaviour he must have courage,



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and do his best to learn, and at that all the people in the doorway murmured encouragingly. He said the night—for the blind call their day night—was now far gone, and it behooved every one to back to sleep. He asked Nunez if he knew how to sleep, and Nunez said he did, but that before sleep, he wanted food.

They brought him food—llama's milk in a bowl, and rough salted bread—and led him into a lonely place to eat out of their hearing, and afterwards to slumber until the chill of the mountain evening roused them to begin their day again. But Nunez slumbered not at all.

Instead, he sat up in the place where they had left him, resting his limbs and turning the unanticipated circumstances of his arrival over and over in his mind.

Every now and then he laughed, sometimes with amusement, and sometimes with indignation.

"Unformed mind!" he said. "Got no senses yet! They little know they've been insulting their heaven-sent king and master. I see I must bring them to reason. Let me think—let me think."

He was still thinking when the sun set.

Nunez had an eye for all beautiful things, and it seemed to him that the glow upon the snow-



fields and glaciers that rose about the valley on every side was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. His eyes went from that inaccessible glory to the village and irrigated fields, fast sinking into the twilight, and suddenly a wave of emotion took him, and he thanked God from the bottom of his heart that the power of sight had been given him.

He heard a voice calling to him from out of the village.

"Ya ho there, Bogota ! Come hither !"

At that he stood up smiling. He would show these people once and for all what sight would do for a man. They would seek him, but not find him.

"You move not, Bogota," said the voice.

He laughed noiselessly, and made two stealthy steps aside from the path.

"Trample not on the grass, Bogota ; that is not allowed."

Nunez had scarcely heard the sound he made himself. He stopped amazed.

The owner of the voice came running up the piebald path towards him.

He stepped back into the pathway. "Here I am," he said.

"Why did you not come when I called you ?"



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said the blind man. "Must you be led like a child ? Cannot you hear the path as you walk ?"

Nunez laughed, "I can see it," he said.

"There is no such word as *see*," said the blind man, after a pause. "Cease this folly, and follow the sound of my feet."

Nunez followed, a little annoyed.

"My time will come," he said.

"You will learn," the blind man answered.
"There is much to learn in the world."

"Has no one told you, 'In the country of the Blind the One-eyed Man is King ?'"

"What is blind ?" asked the blind man carelessly over his shoulder.

Four days passed, and the fifth found the King of the Blind still incognito, as a clumsy and useless stranger among his subjects.

It was, he found, much more difficult to proclaim himself than he had supposed, and in the meantime, while he meditated his *coup d'état*, he did what he was told and learnt the manners and customs of the Country of the Blind. He found working and going about at night a particularly irksome thing, and he decided that that should be the first thing he would change.

They led a simple, laborious life, these people, with all the elements of virtue and happiness, as



these things can be understood by men. They toiled, but not oppressively ; they had food and clothing sufficient for their needs ; they had days and seasons of rest ; they made much of music and singing, and there was love among them, and little children.

It was marvellous with what confidence and precision they went about their ordered world. Everything, you see, had been made to fit their needs ; each of the radiating paths of the valley area had a constant angle to the others, and was distinguished by a special notch upon its kerbing ; all obstacles and irregularities of path or meadow had long since been cleared away ; all their methods and procedure arose naturally from their special needs. Their senses had become marvellously acute ; they could hear and judge the slightest gesture of a man a dozen paces away—could hear the very beating of his heart. Intonation had long replaced expression with them, and touches gesture, and their work with hoe and spade and fork was as free and confident as garden work can be. Their sense of smell was extraordinarily fine ; they could distinguish individual differences as readily as a dog can, and they went about the tending of the llamas, who lived among the rocks above and came to the



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wall for food and shelter, with ease and confidence. It was only when at last Nunez sought to assert himself that he found how easy and confident their movements could be.

He rebelled only after he had tried persuasion.

He tried at first on several occasion to tell them of sight. "Look you here, you people," he said. "There are things you do not understand in me."

Once or twice one or two of them attended to him ; they sat with faces downcast and ears turned intelligently towards him, and he did his best to tell them what it was to see. Among his hearers was a girl, with eyelids less red and sunken than the others, so that one could almost fancy she was hiding eyes, whom especially he hoped to persuade. He spoke of the beauties of sight, of watching the mountains, of the sky and the sunrise, and they heard him with amused incredulity that presently became condemnatory. They told him there were indeed no mountains at all, but that the end of the rocks where the llamas grazed was indeed the end of the world ; thence sprang a cavernous roof of the universe, from which the dew and the avalanches fell ; and when he maintained stoutly the world had neither end nor roof such as they supposed, they said



his thoughts were wicked. So far as he could describe sky and clouds and stars to them it seemed to them a hideous void, a terrible blankness in the place of the smooth roof to things in which they believed—it was an article of faith with them that the cavern roof was exquisitely smooth to the touch. He saw that in some manner he shocked them, and gave up that aspect of the matter altogether, and tried to show them the practical value of sight. One morning he saw Pedro in the path called Seventeen and coming towards the central houses, but still too far off for hearing or scent, and he told them as much. "In a little while," he prophesied, "Pedro will be here." An old man remarked that Pedro had no business on path Seventeen, and then, as if in confirmation, that individual as he drew near turned and went transversely into path Ten, and so back with nimble paces towards the outer wall. They mocked Nunez when Pedro did not arrive, and afterwards, when he asked Pedro questions to clear his character, Pedro denied and outfaced him, and was afterwards hostile to him.

Then he induced them to let him go a long way up the sloping meadows towards the wall with one complacent individual, and to him he

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promised to describe all that happened among the houses. He noted certain goings and comings but the things that really seemed to signify to these people happened inside of or behind the windowless houses—the only things they took note of to test him by—and of these he could see or tell nothing ; and it was after the failure of this attempt, and the ridicule they could not repress, that he resorted to force. He thought of seizing a spade and suddenly smiting one or two of them to earth, and so in fair combat showing the advantage of eyes. He went so far with that resolution as to seize his spade, and then he discovered a new thing about himself, and that was that it was impossible for him to hit a blind man in cold blood.

He hesitated, and found them all aware that he snatched up the spade. They stood alert, with their heads on one side, and bent ears towards him for what he would do next.

“ Put that spade down,” said one, and he felt a sort of helpless horror. He came near obedience.

Then he thrust one backwards against a house-wall, and fled past him and out of the village.

He went athwart one of their meadows, leaving a track of trampled grass behind his feet,



and presently sat down by the side of one of their ways. He felt something of the buoyancy that comes to all men in the beginning of a fight, but more perplexity. He began to realise that you cannot even fight happily with creatures who stand upon a different mental basis to yourself. Far away he saw a number of men carrying spades and sticks come out of the street of houses, and advance in a spreading line along the several paths towards him. They advanced slowly, speaking frequently to one another, and ever and again the whole cordon would halt and sniff the air and listen.

The first time they did this Nunez laughed. But afterwards he did not laugh.

One struck his trail in the meadow grass, and came stooping and feeling his way along it.

For five minutes he watched the slow extension of the cordon, and then his vague disposition to do something forthwith became frantic. He stood up, went a pace or so towards the circumferential wall, turned, and went back a little way. There they all stood in a crescent, still and listening.

He also stood still, gripping his spade very tightly in both hands. Should he charge them?

The pulse in his ears ran into the rhythm of



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" In the Country of the Blind the One-eyed Man is King ! "

Should he charge them ?

He looked back at the high and unclimbable wall behind—unclimbable because of its smooth plastering, but withal pierced with many little doors, and at the approaching line of seekers. Behind these others were now coming out of the street of houses.

Should he charge them ?

" Bogota ! " called one. " Bogota ! where are you ? "

He gripped his spade still tighter, and advanced down the meadows towards the place of habitations, and directly he moved they converged upon him. " I'll hit them if they touch me," he swore ; " by Heaven, I will. I'll hit." He called aloud, " Look here, I'm going to do what I like in this valley. Do you hear ? I'm going to do what I like and go where I like ! "

They were moving in upon him quickly, groping, yet moving rapidly. It was like playing blind man's buff, with everyone blindfolded except one. " Get hold of him ! " cried one. He found himself in the arc of a loose curve of pursuers. He felt suddenly he must be active and resolute.



" You don't understand," he cried in a voice that was meant to be great and resolute, and which broke, " You are blind, and I can see. Leave me alone ! "

" Bogota ! Put down that spade, and come off the grass ! "

The last order, grotesque in its urban familiarity, produced a gust of anger.

" I'll hurt you," he said, sobbing with emotion. " By Heaven, I'll hurt you. Leave me alone ! "

He began to run, not knowing clearly where to run. He ran from the nearest blind man, because it was a horror to hit him. He stopped, and then made a dash to escape from their closing ranks. He made for where a gap was wide, and the men on either side, with a quick perception of the approach of his paces, rushed in on one another. He sprang forward, and then saw he must be caught, and *swish* ! the spade had struck. He felt the soft thud of hand and arm, and the man was down with a yell of pain, and he was through.

Through ! And then he was close to the street of houses again, and blind men, whirling spades and stakes, were running with a sort of reasoned swiftness hither and thither.

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He heard steps behind him just in time, and found a tall man rushing forward and swiping at the sound of him. He lost his nerve, hurled his spade a yard wide at his antagonist, and whirled about and fled, fairly yelling as he dodged another.

He was panic-stricken. He ran furiously to and fro, dodging when there was no need to dodge, and in his anxiety to see on every side of him at once, stumbling. For a moment he was down and they heard his fall. Far away in the circumferential wall a little doorway looked like heaven, and he set off in a wild rush for it. He did not even look round at his pursuers until it was gained, and he had stumbled across the bridge, clambered a little way among the rocks, to the surprise and dismay of a young llama, who went leaping out of sight, and lay down sobbing for breath.

And so his *coup d'etat* came to an end.

He stayed outside the wall of the valley of the Blind for two nights and days without food or shelter, and meditated upon the unexpected. During these meditations he repeated very frequently and always with a profounder note of derision the exploded proverb : "In the Country of the Blind the One-eyed Man is King." He thought chiefly of ways of fighting and conquering



these people, and it grew clear that for him no practicable way was possible. He had no weapons, and now it would be hard to get one.

The canker of civilisation had got to him even in Bogota, and he could not find it in himself to go down and assassinate a blind man. Of course, if he did that he might then dictate terms on the threat of assassinating them all. But—sooner or later he must sleep !.....

He tried also to find food among the pine trees, to be comfortable under pine boughs while the frost fell at night, and—with less confidence—to catch a llama by artifice in order to try to kill it—perhaps by hammering it with a stone—and so finally, perhaps, to eat some of it. But the llamas had a doubt of him, and regarded him with distrustful brown eyes, and spat when he drew near. Fear came on him the second day and fits of shivering. Finally he crawled down to the wall of the Country of the Blind and tried to make terms. He crawled along by the stream, shouting, until two blind men came out to the gate and talked to him.

"I was mad," he said. "But I was only newly made."

They said that was better.

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He told them he was wiser now, and repented of all he had done.

Then he wept without intention, for he was very weak and ill now, and they took that as a favourable sign.

They asked him if he still thought he could "see."

"No," he said. "That was folly. The word means nothing—less than nothing!"

They asked him what was overhead.

"About ten times ten the height of a man there is a roof above the world—of rock—and very, very smooth."

He burst again into hysterical tears. "Before you ask me any more, give me some food or I shall die."

He expected dire punishments, but these blind people were capable of toleration. They regarded his rebellion as but one more proof of his general idiocy and inferiority ; and after they had whipped him they appointed him to do the simplest and heaviest work they had for any one to do, and he, seeing no other way of living, did submissively what he was told.

He was ill for some days, and they nursed him kindly. That refined his submission. But they insisted on his lying in the dark, and that was a



great misery. And blind philosophers came and talked to him of the wicked levity of his mind, and reproved him so impressively for his doubts about the lid of rock that covered their cosmic casserole that he almost doubted whether indeed he was not the victim of hallucination in not seeing it overhead.

So Nunez became a citizen of the Country of the Blind, and these people ceased to be a generalised people and became individualities and familiar to him, while the world beyond the mountains became more and more remote and unreal. There was Yacob, his master, a kindly man when not annoyed ; there was Pedro, Yacob's nephew ; and there was Medina-saroté, who was the youngest daughter of Yacob. She was little esteemed in the world of the blind, because she had a clear-cut face, and lacked that satisfying, glossy smoothness that is the blind man's ideal of feminine beauty ; but Nunez thought her beautiful at first, and presently the most beautiful thing in the whole creation. Her closed eye-lids were not sunken and red after the common way of the valley, but lay as though they might open again at any moment ; and she had long eyelashes, which were considered a great disfigurement. And her voice was strong, and did not satisfy the acute hearing of the valley swains. So that she had no lover.



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There came a time when Nunez thought that, could he win her, he would be resigned to live in the valley for all the rest of his days.

He watched her ; he sought opportunities of doing her little services, and presently he found that she observed him. Once at a rest-day gathering they sat side by side in dim starlight, and the music was sweet. His hand came upon hers and he dared to clasp it. Then very tenderly she returned his pressure. And one day, as they were at their meal in the darkness, he felt her hand very softly seeking him, and as it chanced the fire leaped then and he saw the tenderness of her face.

He sought to speak to her.

He went to her one day when she was sitting in the summer moonlight spinning. The light made her a thing of silver and mystery. He sat down at her feet and told her he loved her, and told her how beautiful she seemed to him. He had a lover's voice, he spoke with a tender reverence that came near to awe, and she had never before been touched by adoration. She made him no definite answer, but it was clear his words pleased her.

After that he talked to her whenever he could take an opportunity. The valley became the world for him, and the world beyond the mountains



where men lived in sunlight seemed no more than a fairy tale he would some day pour into her ears. Very tentatively and timidly he spoke to her of sight.

Sight seemed to her the most poetical of fancies, and she listened to his description of the stars and the mountains and her own sweet white-lit beauty as though it was a guilty indulgence. She did not believe, she could only half understand, but she was mysteriously delighted, and it seemed to him that she completely understood.

His love lost its awe and took courage. Presently he was for demanding her of Yacob and the elders in marriage, but she became fearful and delayed. And it was one of her elder sisters who first told Yacob that Medina-saroté and Nunez were in love.

There was from the first very great opposition to the marriage of Nunez and Medina-saroté ; not so much because they valued her as because they held him as a being apart, an idiot, incompetent thing below the permissible level of a man. Her sister opposed it bitterly as bringing discredit on them all ; and old Yacob, though he had formed a sort of liking for his clumsy, obedient serf, shook his head and said the thing could not be.

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The young men were all angry at the idea of corrupting the race, and one went so far as to revile and strike Nunez. He struck back. Then for the first time he found an advantage in seeing, even by twilight, and after that fight was over no one was disposed to raise a hand against him. But they still found his marriage impossible.

Old Yacob had a tenderness for his last little daughter, and was grieved to have her weep upon his shoulder.

" You see, my dear, he is an idiot. He has delusions ; he can't do anything right."

" I know," wept Medina-saroté. " But he's better than he was. He's getting better. And he's strong, dear father, and kind—stronger and kinder than any other man in the world. And he loves me—and, father, I love him."

Old Yacob was greatly distressed to find her inconsolable, and, besides—what made it more distressing—he liked Nunez for many things. So he went and sat in the windowless council-chamber with the other elders and watched the trend of the talk, and said at the proper time, " He's better than he was. Very likely some day, we shall find him as sane as ourselves."

Then afterwards one of the elders, who thought deeply, had an idea. He was the great doctor



among these people, their medicine-man, and he had a very philosophical and inventive mind, and the idea of curing Nunez of his peculiarities appealed to him. One day when Yacob was present he returned to the topic of Nunez.

"I have examined Bogota," he said, "and the case is clearer to me. I think very probably he might be cured."

"That is what I have always hoped," said old Yacob.

"His brain is affected," said the blind doctor. The elders murmured assent.

"Now, *what affects it?*"

"Ah!" said old Yacob.

"*This,*" said the doctor, answering his own question. "Those queer things that are called the eyes, and which exist to make an agreeable soft depression in the face, are diseased, in the case of Bogota in such a way as to affect his brain. They are greatly distended, he has eyelashes, and his eyelids move and consequently his brain is in a state of constant irritation and distraction."

"Yes?" said old Yacob. "Yes?"

"And I think I may say with reasonable certainty that, in order to cure him completely, all that we need do is a simple and easy surgical operation—namely, to remove these irritant bodies."



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" And then he will be sane ? "

" Then he will be perfectly sane, and a quite admirable citizen."

" Thank Heaven for science ! " said old Yacob, and went forth at once to tell Nunez of his happy hopes.

But Nunez's manner of receiving the good news struck him as being cold and disappointing.

" One might think," he said, " from the tone you take, that you did not care for my daughter."

It was Medina-saroté who persuaded Nunez to face the blind surgeons.

" You do not want me," he said, " to lose my gift of sight ? "

She shook her head.

" My world is sight."

Her head drooped lower.

" There are the beautiful things, the beautiful little things—the flowers, the lichens among the rocks, the lightness and softness on a piece of fur, the far sky with its drifting down of clouds, the sunsets and the stars. And there is *you*. For you alone it is good to have sight, to see your sweet, serene face, your kindly lips, your dear, beautiful hands folded together...It is these eyes of mine you won, these eyes that hold me to you,



that these idiots seek. Instead I must touch you, hear you, and never see you again. I must come under that roof of rock and stone and darkness, that horrible roof under which your imagination stoops.....No ; you would not have me do that ?"

A disagreeable doubt had arisen in him. He stopped, and left the thing a question.

" I wish," she said, " sometimes—" She paused.

" Yes ?" said he, a little apprehensively.

" I wish sometimes—you would not talk like that."

" Like what ?"

" I know it's pretty—it's your imagination. I love it but now—"

He felt cold. " Now ?" he said faintly.

She sat quite still.

" You mean—you think—I should be better, better perhaps—"

He was realising things very swiftly. He felt anger, indeed, anger at the dull course of fate, but also sympathy for her lack of understanding—a sympathy near akin to pity.

" Dear," he said, and he could see by her whiteness how intensely her spirit pressed against the things she could not say. He put his arms



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about her, he kissed her ear, and they sat for a time in silence.

"If I were to consent to this?" he said at last, in a voice that was very gentle.

She flung her arms about him, weeping wildly. "Oh, if you would," she sobbed, "if only you would!"

For a week before the operation that was to raise him from his servitude and inferiority to the level of a blind citizen, Nunez knew nothing of sleep, and all through the warm sunlit hours, while the others slumbered happily, he sat brooding or wandered aimlessly, trying to bring his mind to bear on his dilemma. He had given his answer, he had given his consent, and still he was not sure. And at last work-time was over, the sun rose in splendour over the golden crests, and his last day of vision began for him. He had a few minutes with Medina-saroté before she went apart to sleep.

"To-morrow," he said, "I shall see no more."

"Dear heart!" she answered, and pressed his hand with all her strength.

"They will hurt you but little," she said; "and you are going through this pain—you are going through it, dear lover, for me.....Dear, if



a woman's heart and life can do it, I will repay you. My dearest one, my dearest with the tender voice, I will repay."

He was drenched in pity for himself and her.

He held her in his arms, and pressed his lips to hers, and looked on her sweet face for the last time. "Good-bye!" he whispered at that dear sight, "good-bye!"

And then in silence he turned away from her.

She could hear his slow retreating footsteps, and something in the rhythm of them threw her into a passion of weeping.

He had fully meant to go to a lonely place where the meadows were beautiful with white narcissus, and there remain until the hour of his sacrifice should come, but as he went he lifted up his eyes and saw the morning, the morning like an angel in golden armour, marching down the steeps.....

It seemed to him that before this splendour he, and this blind world in the valley, and his love, and all, were no more than a pit of sin.

He did not turn aside as he had meant to do, but went on, and passed through the wall of the circumference and out upon the rocks, and his eyes were always upon the sunlit ice and snow.

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He saw their infinite beauty, and his imagination soared over them to the thing beyond he was now to resign for ever.

He thought of that great free world he was parted from, the world that was his own, and he had a vision of those further slopes, distance beyond distance, with Bogota, a place of multitudinous stirring beauty, a glory by day, a luminous mystery by night, a place of palaces and fountains and statues, and white houses, lying beautifully in the middle distance. He thought how for a day or so one might come through passes, drawing ever nearer and nearer to its busy streets and ways. He thought of the river journey, day by day, from great Bogota to the still vaster world beyond, through towns and villages, forest and desert places, the rushing river day by day, until its banks receded and the big steamers came splashing by, and one had reached the sea—the limitless sea, with its thousand islands, its thousands of islands, and its ships seen dimly far away in their incessant journeyings round and about that greater world. And there, unpent by mountains, one saw the sky—the sky, not such a disc as one saw it here, but an arch of immeasurable blue, a deep of deeps in which the circling stars were floating.....



His eyes scrutinised the great curtain of the mountains with a keener inquiry.

For example, if one went so, up the gully and the chimney there, then one might come out high among those stunted pines that ran round in a sort of shelf and rose still higher and higher as it passed above the gorge. And then ? That talus might be managed. Thence perhaps a climb might be found to take him up to the precipice that came below the snow ; and if that chimney failed, then another farther to the east might serve his purpose better. And then ? Then one would be out upon the amber-lit snow there, and half-way up to the crest of those beautiful desolations.

He glanced back at the village, then turned right round and regarded it steadfastly.

He thought of Medina-saroté, and she had become small and remote.

He turned again towards the mountain wall, down which the day had come to him.

Then very circumspectly he began to climb.

When sunset came he was no longer climbing, but he was far and high. He had been higher, but he was still very high. His clothes were torn, his limbs were blood-stained, he was bruised in many places, but he lay as if he were at his ease, and there was a smile on his face.



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From where he rested the valley seemed as if it were in a pit and nearly a mile below. Already it was dim with haze and shadow, though the mountain summits around him were things of light and fire. The mountain summits around him were things of light and fire, and the little details of the rocks near at hand were drenched with subtle beauty—a vein of green mineral piercing the grey, the flash of crystal faces here and there, a minute, minutely-beautiful orange lichen close beside his face. There were deep mysterious shadows in the gorge, blue deepening into purple, and purple into a luminous darkness, and over-head was the illimitable vastness of the sky.

But he heeded these things no longer, but lay quite inactive there, smiling as if he were satisfied merely to have escaped from the valley of the Blind in which he had thought to be King.

The glow of the sunset passed, and the night came, and still he lay peacefully contented under the cold stars.

Herbert George Wells.



GILOLO

That island had always attracted me, in the way a fabulous sea-desert does a reader who is over-fond of Robinson Crusoe. Yet my island is more secluded than Crusoe's ; though it is a geographical fact, that is all it is. A book about it does not exist, to my knowledge—there may be one in Dutch—and my chance of ever seeing it as a landfall was as remote as are the Hesperides from us all. Now and again I chanced on its name in a traveller's tale, though the reference was never more substantial than a bare allusion ; my island acquired merely the deepened attraction of what is withheld. There is, as you know, a plentiful bibliography, scientific, of the imagination, and even of the department of humour, built on its next big neighbour to the eastward, Papua; but I have met with only one authority on the subject of Halmaheira, or Gilolo, and that young man, of Holland, who had been exiled upon the island, and when I met him had but just escaped from it, was too reduced by fever, and so unused to the society of his fellows, that he never said anything about Gilolo except "it is not good."

Look at it on the right chart!—but no, you had better not. You will be lost, if you get hold of the kind of chart a sailor must use when approaching it. That island is an ample place; the equator divides it; the blank spaces of its chart and the warnings to mariners show that you might die there if your experience and intelligence proved to be inadequate; the names scattered about its coast would draw anyone half round the world, which is the exact distance of the island from skyscrapers and the fun of the fair; its coast-line is so devious and convoluted that to sail round it would be a long adventure, with never a warning of what to expect up that river, or round that cape. We had better leave its chart alone.

A day came, and sunrise was the time, when at last there dead ahead of me was the very island itself. I was half way round the world. The island was as unreal as ever; it was only a lower shape among the vapours of dawn. Before we neared it my ship landed me at another and a much smaller island of the Moluccas, where Drake was entertained by the Sultan. There I had to stay, though that was no hardship. Across the water, from the beach of Ternate, every day I saw the fantastic cloud of Gilolo still persisted on the sea; it merely changed its colours with the



hours. But as for crossing over to it, who would put out to land on a cloud ?

A Dutch medical officer, while taking his gin and bitters, said to me, in extreme displeasure, that he was soon to visit Gilolo. It was most lonely. He was not a sailor, he was a soldier. The garrison over the water, it was necessary to visit, very bad fever and yaws, also dysenteries. He would be pleased if I go. And that was why I went down to the jetty of Ternate, early one morning, and found indeed the official motor-launch, with two Malays squatting on its bottom boards. The voyage to my island began to appear so easy a probability that my scepticism hardened. For one thing, the doctor had not arrived. It was hardly time for him yet, maybe ; still much too early for an official. As for me, already the power of the sun made me feel that even Gilolo could wait a little longer ; or even for ever, now the inducement was immediate. When we may, we do not. If the doctor did not come, then I could stay where I was, and not repine. One of the Malays invited me to take a seat in the launch, but its space was cramped, and it was too glaringly white and hot. The big island over the water was a violet chimera with a notched back. Mr. O'Keefe was near me on the jetty, talking freely



to the crew of a prahu ; I saluted, and made to approach that Irishman, but he only scowled, and turned away.

I had to wait alone. It was the Dutch padre who had introduced me to Mr. O'Keefe, the night before, and because I had shown some doubt about him ; for this missionary had informed me that he had christened, and only last Sunday, three black children of an English woman who lived on Gilolo. He was trying to persuade me that my unexplored island was already infected by civility. I assured him that these exiled and outlawed countrymen of mine, whenever I had met them, were no more like English than Kalmucks. If they spoke English, it was only a Suez variety of the language of sailors. "All right. You come with me and see Mr. O'Keefe. He is English." It was useless to warn a Dutchman that O'Keefe, should he prove true to form, might try to kill any man who called him English. So we went to see this Irishman, who owns an island in these seas, and cultivates coconuts. Mrs. O'Keefe, too, was there. It was night, there was an oil-lamp that was no better than a symbol in a dark temple, and in that gloom the Irishman's wife might have been a dubious pagan deity posed in seclusion. With her feet tucked under her on the floor she



sat with a hand stretched on each knee, looked down her ebon nose, and did not move, and made no sound. I thought she would never respond except to cabalistic words I did not know. I did not dare look at her after my first startled glance. O'Keefe himself was a man who would have raised no comment as an under-steward in a Portuguese ship. He did not speak English, and could not make out why we were there.

I ignored him that morning on the jetty, after my first greeting, and stared overside. A rose-coloured lory, perched near me on the rail, made a friendly noise and sidled towards me. This parrot was less foreign than O'Keefe. I tried lazily to detect the surface of the water beneath. If you looked straight at the glass it had no surface. Your gaze, as though too heavy for this equatorial sort of water, fell to the bottom, to coral shrubs the colour of the parrot, to hummocks that were olive-green, to a garden five fathoms down. I could see suspensory groups of stalkless blossoms, or else they were fishes, beneath me. Those coloured particles were free, and they drifted about invariably true to their own colour and kind. They were never confused. The numerous vivid atoms of each group, in the denser air below, sparkled ruby or gold, and the

company of each sort moved as one body, invisibly attached. One swarm of them, glittering like a constellation before the dark opening of a cave, suddenly dispersed in minute flashes of blue lightning. Another cluster were of saffron with black stripes, and they were swaying in a draught I could not feel up above ; they slowly dissolved, and then reappeared to sway elsewhere. I was only looking on ; in the heat of the day the sight was the only sense which kept awake. An array of shining torpedoes swept into the transparency, and the little flowers vanished. The glass below me trembled, the bottom of the sea wavered, reticulated, and faded. Now I could see its surface.

"We go now." I looked up, and the young doctor was behind me, smiling, his raiment white from boots to helmet, and with him was a Malay carrying a leather case. We embarked. Soon we were in the rip of the tide. The native at the wheel touched the gear as a skilled instrumentalist, and the way he chewed betel should have given the doctor full confidence, but the doctor confided to me, "I do not like this." A younger Malay squatted in the bows, on the look-out, with about as much movement as a bronze figure-head. The engine crooned a song to itself, which varied in its



loudness as she rolled, lifted, and plunged. I looked astern, and the jetty had shrunk into the high bulk of Ternate. The fleet of canoes of the fishermen had partly melted and were indeterminate in a glare. We opened out the shore, which was marked by a diminishing array of miles of pale coconut palms. Those palms were the sea-verge of the precipitous green forest of the volcano which was our home. Now we could watch, not without suspicion, our island's head, far, rufous, and indolently puffing its smoke.

The launch rolled and toiled along, but Gilolo came no nearer. I thought it had receded. Its accessibility, with a ship as small as ours, was not apparent. The sea, too, was by no means as placid as it had looked from the jetty. It behaved in a way that was curious to me ; but then its bottom was unequal with reefs, and no doubt tides and currents could be at a serious difference in that channel. The waters swirled and upheaved unreasonably.

The mountains of Gilolo appeared to have heightened ; but then, I had to remember, we were down among the waves. That array of gigantic shapes, high and acute, could have been on one plane, and without body, all equally distant, for they were without shadows. Gilolo

was but an illusion of land, the theatrical back-cloth for a drama without human attributes. Our little boat swayed and cheerfully sang in the sun, and that was the only sound, and for I do not know how long.

I noticed, presently, that those distant heights were acquiring bulk. Shadows fell between the ranges. The straight line of coast developed bays, and began to emerge as promontories. One gulf retired gradually, as we progressed, to a surprising penetration of the island. Gilolo grew more vivid, and its colour was green, though without the least variation. It was a toneless green, from the shore to the sharp peaks, for it was all forest, all unexplored forest. What work, to learn what was among those mountains ! Not even a canoe was on this side of the strait. It was strange that our little craft should make so cheerful and innocently impudent a noise when approaching that immense silence.

No beach was to be seen. The forest rose from the water, as steep as cliffs of emerald. I failed to see how even yaws could be found there. We stood in, and two arms of the island unfolded to meet us, and between them we went, and on the port side turned to a landing place



and a few huts. Nobody met us. We landed, and went along a track towards a huddle of shacks abandoned to silence, under a scatter of lofty palms ; when we reached them, a few nocturnal and melancholy women, who separated from the shadows when they moved, glanced briefly and sadly at us. Perhaps they knew that our brisk interruption from the world of men could not break the spell of their place. The doctor entered a larger hut, and left me to please myself. I could do nothing to help him, his business being what it was.

In Gilolo the sounds of life had not begun. It was broad day, and therefore I knew the island was not sunk in the sleep of midnight. A dog or a child would have increased a wayfarer's confidence. My steps made a startling uproar among leaf parchments on my way to the mangroves ; the harsh noise made me turn to the huts, to see whether my indiscretion was signalled. Their faces were blank. Nothing living was in sight. My friend the doctor was swallowed by the quiet. When out of sight of the settlement, eruptions of grasshoppers went before me in the herbage, and made a continuous whispering, parched and secretive. Not even a butterfly was there, and usually one does see at least that

in a tropical wilderness, to give a touch of original joy to an outlandish place. Once, though, I heard a sweet and plaintive trilling in a shrub, like that of a warbler, and it was then as if the primeval nature of Gilolo stirred with the origin of a known life. I did not hear it again. But it fortified me when I was down by the black mud of the mangroves, where the prospect belonged to an earlier geological age, and thousands of hermit crabs strolled about the slime with their shells over them, as bonnets. I did not see the labyrinthodon, the monster that once frequented such a scene when coal was a flourishing forest of the prime, long before it was near to being merely one of man's economic problems. Yet though the appearance of that autochthonous reptile, upheaving from the morass, would have been proper to Gilolo's mangrove swamp, I was prepared for him, for I had heard a warbler beforehand, and so was sure I was in my own day, and not his. For the same reason, too, the crabs were amusing ; the shells they carried awkwardly about made comic wobbling movements when they hurried, like the insecure bonnets of old ladies all desperately eager to catch a bus. When I looked up, the forest across the creek regarded me with the large composure



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of a guardian of the unrevealed, confident that I should attempt there nothing that was foolish. It knew that its aspect was sufficiently repressive. (But ah ! if one had only more time ! To have gone over, and entered that forest, and continued to its Pacific shore !)

The doctor appeared again. The chanting of the boat's motor on the way home brought a smile of relief to my companion's face, but it did not alter the countenance of Gilolo, which stood over us darkly, to watch us depart. We got out of its arms, and were at sea again. Now, it was our intention to have a meal in the boat, on the home run, but our little ship's behaviour was discouraging. A serious dispute developed between the seas and the submerged reefs, and our launch was involved in it. The seas were angry, for they were in a hurry, but were checked. The doctor turned hopefully to look at our own island, to see how near it was. But it was not near. It was no sort of home, at that distance. It was only a cone, resting on the horizon. The boat jumped, then wallowed in a trough, and a gallon of water fell at the surgeon's feet. We had no deck.

We worked more into the open, and there the turmoil of malignant seas forming pyramids

and toppling ridges obscured the shore for which we were making. Our motor boat became smaller, I thought. Its movements now were unpredictable, and I must confess to an effort to confirm my faith, in an engine which, I was glad to see, was made at Southampton, for if that broke down through stress, unless something worse happened we should have to drift under the sun next day for nobody could say how long, and without water. Even a brave man might not choose to be adrift at sea, in that unfrequented low latitude.

A comber exploded, and the engine raced. The poor doctor's face went grey. He was drenched. His English was scanty, but he found some then, and exclaimed in simple candour, "I am afraid." I was anxious myself, though not yet afraid, for I had been watching, in suspicious curiosity, our Malay at the wheel. He knew what he was about. No man could have handled that craft better. He parried the attacks like a clever fencer. Besides, was it not unthinkable that an Englishman should be drowned with a Dutchman and three Malays in an unimportant channel of the Moluccas ? Of course it was.

We sighted a large sailing prahu, and over-hauled it rapidly. It was steering an erratic



course, and this puzzled our Malays, who made over to determine whatever might be wrong. We drew alongside, and saw she was abandoned, though she was dry and shipshape. Our men manoeuvred the launch, against the violent orders of their superior officer, in an effort to get a line and a man aboard the derelict. The spray smothered us again, but there was a really serious matter at last, and the Malays calmly ignored the doctor and his expostulations. A youth hung overside on his toes, and made fast. Away we went, after an alarming confusion of many bumps and clamorous fountains, with our tow. Did a doctor for soldiers foolishly imagine that Malay seamen were going to give a perfectly sound prahu to the wastes ? The prahu with its outrigger foamed astern, and I was expected to watch the tow-rope. In another hour we were under the comforting lee of our volcano. Gilolo was an illusion again ; its fantastic ramparts had darkened to purple under a sunset sky of rose and cinnabar.

The sea between us and Gilolo was a floor of transient opalescence. When that light went out, so did the sea, except a phosphorescent glowing in the foam from our launch and its tow. It was night ; but the peak of Ternate,



in the meridian, was either active, or else a belated hour of day was caught on its rim. Red clouds of fiery smoke stretched from the crater as luminous pennants. Within the dark between the palms along the shore points of light were sprinkled. We could hear voices on the beach.

H. M. Tomlinson.



THE DYING SUN

A few stars are known which are hardly bigger than the earth, but the majority are so large that hundreds of thousands of earths could be packed inside each and leave room to spare ; here and there we come upon a giant star large enough to contain millions of millions of earths. And the total number of stars in the universe is probably something like the total number of grains of sand on all the sea-shores of the world. Such is the littleness of our home in space when measured up against the total substance of the universe.

This vast multitude of stars are wandering about in space. A few form groups which journey in company, but the majority are solitary travellers. And they travel through a universe so spacious that it is an event of almost unimaginable rarity for a star to come anywhere near to another star. For the most part each voyages in splendid isolation, like a ship on an empty ocean. In a scale model in which the stars are ships, the average ship will be well over a million miles from its nearest neighbour, whence it is.



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easy to understand why a ship seldom finds another within hailing distance.

We believe, nevertheless, that some two thousand million years ago this rare event took place, and that a second star, wandering blindly through space, happened to come within hailing distance of the sun. Just as the sun and moon raise tides on the earth, so this second star must have raised tides on the surface of the sun. But they would be very different from the puny tides which the small mass of the moon raises in our oceans ; a huge tidal wave must have travelled over the surface of the sun, ultimately forming a mountain of prodigious height, which would rise ever higher and higher as the cause of the disturbance came nearer and nearer. And, before the second star began to recede, its tidal pull had become so powerful that this mountain was torn to pieces and threw off small fragments of itself, much as the crest of a wave throws off spray. These small fragments have been circulating around their parent sun ever since. They are the planets, great and small, of which our earth is one.

The sun and the other stars we see in the sky are all intensely hot—far too hot for life to be able to obtain or retain a footing on them.



So also no doubt were the ejected fragments of the sun when they were first thrown off. Gradually they cool, until now they have but little intrinsic heat left, their warmth being derived almost entirely from the radiation which the sun pours down upon them. In course of time, we know not how, when, or why, one of these cooling fragments gave birth to life. It started in simple organisms whose vital capacities consisted of little beyond reproduction and death. But from these humble beginnings emerged a stream of life which, advancing through ever greater and greater complexity, has culminated in beings whose lives are largely centred in their emotions and ambitions, their aesthetic appreciations, and the religions in which their highest hopes and noblest aspirations lie enshrined.

Although we cannot speak with any certainty, it seems most likely that humanity came into existence in some such way as this. Standing on our microscopic fragment of a grain of sand, we attempt to discover the nature and purpose of the universe which surrounds our home in space and time. Our first impression is something akin to terror. We find the universe terrifying because of its vast meaningless distances,

terrifying because of its inconceivably long vistas of time which dwarf human history to the twinkling of an eye, terrifying because of our extreme loneliness, and because of the material insignificance of our home in space—a millionth part of a grain of sand out of all the sea-sand in the world. But above all else, we find the universe terrifying because it appears to be indifferent to life like our own ; emotion, ambition and achievement, art and religion all seem equally foreign to its plan. Perhaps indeed we ought to say it appears to be actively hostile to life like our own. For the most part, empty space is so cold that all life in it would be frozen ; most of the matter in space is so hot as to make life on it impossible ; space is traversed, and astronomical bodies continually bombarded, by radiation of a variety of kinds, much of which is probably inimical to, or even destructive of, life.

Into such a universe we have stumbled, if not exactly by mistake, at least as the result of what may properly be described as an accident. The use of such a word need not imply any surprise that our earth exists, for accidents will happen, and if the universe goes on for long enough, every conceivable accident is likely to



happen in time. It was, I think, Huxley who said that six monkeys, set to strum unintelligently on typewriters for millions of millions of years, would be bound in time to write all the books in the British Museum. If we examined the last page which a particular monkey had typed, and found that it had chanced, in its blind strumming, to type a Shakespeare sonnet, we should rightly regard the occurrence as a remarkable accident, but if we looked through all the millions of pages the monkeys had turned off in untold millions of years, we might be sure of finding a Shakespeare sonnet somewhere amongst them, the product of the blind play of chance. In the same way, millions of millions of stars wandering blindly through space for millions of millions of years are bound to meet with every kind of accident ; a limited number are bound to meet with that special kind of accident which calls planetary systems into being. Yet calculation shews that the number of these can at most be very small in comparison with the total number of stars in the sky ; planetary systems must be exceedingly rare objects in space.

This rarity of planetary systems is important, because so far as we can see, life of the kind

we know on earth could only originate on planets like the earth. It needs suitable physical conditions for its appearance, the most important of which is a temperature at which substances can exist in the liquid state.

The stars themselves are disqualified by being far too hot. We may think of them as a vast collection of fires scattered throughout space, providing warmth in a climate which is at most some four degrees above absolute zero—about 484 degrees of frost on our Fahrenheit scale—and is even lower in the vast stretches of space which lie out beyond the Milky Way. Away from the fires there is this unimaginable cold of hundreds of degrees of frost ; close up to them there is a temperature of thousands of degrees, at which all solids melt, all liquids boil.

Life can only exist inside a narrow temperate zone which surrounds each of these fires at a very definite distance. Outside these zones life would be frozen ; inside, it would be shrivelled up. At a rough computation, these zones within which life is possible, all added together, constitute less than a thousand million millionth part of the whole of space. And even inside them, life must be of very rare occurrence, for it is so unusual an accident for suns to throw off planets



as our own sun has done, that probably only about one star in 100,000 has a planet revolving round it in the small zone in which life is possible.

Just for this reason it seems incredible that the universe can have been designed primarily to produce life like our own ; had it been so, surely we might have expected to find a better proportion between the magnitude of the mechanism and the amount of the product. At first glance at least, life seems to be an utterly unimportant by-product; we living things are somehow off the main line.

We do not know whether suitable physical conditions are sufficient in themselves to produce life. One school of thought holds that as the earth gradually cooled, it was natural, and indeed almost inevitable, that life should come. Another holds that after one accident had brought the earth into being, a second was necessary to produce life. The material constituents of a living body are perfectly ordinary chemical atoms—carbon, such as we find in soot or lampblack; hydrogen and oxygen, such as we find in water; nitrogen, such as forms the greater part of the atmosphere; and so on. Every kind of atom necessary for life must have existed on the new-born earth.

At intervals, a group of atoms might happen to arrange themselves in the way in which they are arranged in the living cell. Indeed, given sufficient time, they would be certain to do so, just as certain as the six monkeys would be certain, given sufficient time, to type off a Shakespeare sonnet. But would they then be a living cell ? In other words, is a living cell merely a group of ordinary atoms arranged in some non-ordinary way, or is it something more ? Is it merely atoms, or is it atoms plus life ? Or, to put it in another way, could a sufficiently skilful chemist create life out of the necessary atoms, as a boy can create a machine out of "Meccano," *and then make it go?* We do not know the answer. When it comes it will give us some indication whether other worlds in space are inhabited like ours, and so must have the greatest influence on our interpretation of the meaning of life—it may well produce a greater revolution of thought than Galileo's astronomy or Darwin's biology.

We do, however, know that while living matter consists of quite ordinary atoms, it consists in the main of atoms which have a special capacity for coagulating into extra-ordinary large bunches or "molecules."

Most atoms do not possess this property. The

atoms of hydrogen and oxygen, for instance, may combine to form molecules of hydrogen (H_2 or H_3), of oxygen or ozone (O_2 or O_3), of water (H_2O), or of hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2), but none of these compounds contains more than four atoms. The addition of nitrogen does not greatly change the situation; the compounds of hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen all contain comparatively few atoms. But the further addition of carbon completely transforms the picture; the atoms of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon combine to form molecules containing hundreds, thousands, and even tens of thousands of atoms. It is of such molecules that living bodies are mainly formed. Until a century ago it was commonly supposed that some "vital force" was necessary to produce these and the other substances which entered into the composition of the living body. Then Wöhler produced urea, $CO(NH_2)_2$, which is a typical animal product, in his laboratory, by the ordinary process of chemical synthesis, and other constituents of the living body followed in due course. To-day one phenomenon after another which was at one time attributed to "vital force" is being traced to the action of the ordinary processes of physics and chemistry. Although the problem is still far from solution, it is becoming

increasingly likely that what specially distinguishes the matter of living bodies is the presence not of a "vital force," but of the quite commonplace element carbon, always in conjunction with other atoms with which it forms exceptionally large molecules.

If this is so, life exists in the universe only because the carbon atom possesses certain exceptional properties. Perhaps carbon is rather noteworthy chemically as forming a sort of transition between the metals and non-metals, but so far nothing in the physical constitution of the carbon atom is known to account for its very special capacity for binding other atoms together. The carbon atom consists of six electrons revolving around the appropriate central nucleus, like six planets revolving around a central sun; it appears to differ from its two nearest neighbours in the table of chemical elements, the atoms of boron and nitrogen, only in having one electron more than the former and one electron fewer than the latter. Yet this slight difference must account in the last resort for all the difference between life and absence of life. No doubt the reason why the six-electron atom possesses these remarkable properties resides somewhere in the ultimate laws of nature, but mathematical physics has not yet fathomed it.



So much for the surprising manner in which, so far as science can at present inform us, we came into being. And our bewilderment is only increased when we attempt to pass from our origins to an understanding of the purpose of our existence, or to foresee the destiny which fate has in store for our race.

Life of the kind we know can only exist under suitable conditions of light and heat; we only exist ourselves because the earth receives exactly the right amount of radiation from the sun; upset the balance in either direction, of excess or defect, and life must disappear from the earth. And the essence of the situation is that the balance is very easily upset.

Primitive man, living in the temperate zone of the earth, must have watched the ice-age descending on his home with something like terror; each year the glaciers came farther down into the valleys; each winter the sun seemed less able to provide the warmth needed for life. To him, as to us, the universe must have seemed hostile to life.

We of these later days, living in the narrow temperate zone surrounding our sun and peering into the far future, see an ice-age of a different kind threatening us. Just as Tantalus, standing

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in a lake so deep that he only just escaped drowning, was yet destined to die of thirst, so it is the tragedy of our race that it is probably destined to die of cold, while the greater part of the substance of the universe still remains too hot for life to obtain a footing. The sun, having no extraneous supply of heat, must necessarily emit ever less and less of its life-giving radiation, and, as it does so, the temperate zone of space, within which alone life can exist, must close in around it. To remain a possible abode of life, our earth would need to move in ever nearer and nearer to the dying sun. Yet, science tells us that, so far from its moving inwards, inexorable dynamical laws are even now driving it ever farther away from the sun into the outer cold and darkness. And, so far as we can see, they must continue to do so until life is frozen of the earth, unless indeed some celestial collision or cataclysm intervenes to destroy life even earlier by a more speedy death. This prospective fate is not peculiar to our earth; other suns must die like our own, and any life there may be on other planets must meet the same inglorious end.

Physics tells the same story as astronomy. For, independently of all astronomical considerations, the general physical principle known as the



second law of thermodynamics predicts that there can be but one end to the universe—a “heat-death” in which the total energy of the universe is uniformly distributed, and all the substance of the universe is at the same temperature. This temperature will be so low as to make life impossible. It matters little by what particular road this final state is reached ; all roads lead to Rome, and the end of the journey cannot be other than universal death.

Is this, then, all that life amounts to—to stumble, almost by mistake, into a universe which was clearly not designed for life, and which, to all appearances, is either totally indifferent or definitely hostile to it, to stay clinging on to a fragment of a grain of sand until we are frozen off, to strut our tiny hour on our tiny stage with the knowledge that our aspirations are all doomed to final frustration, and that our achievements must perish with our race, leaving the universe as though we had never been ?

Sir James Jeans.



DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

Two highly incongruous travellers, Mary Wollstonecraft and Dorothy Wordsworth, followed close upon each other's footsteps. Mary was in Altona on the Elbe in 1795 with her baby ; three years later Dorothy came there with her brother and Coleridge. Both kept a record of their travels ; both saw the same places, but the eyes with which they saw them were very different. Whatever Mary saw served to start her mind upon some theory, upon the effect of government, upon the state of the people, upon the mystery of her own soul. The beat of the oars on the waves made her ask, " Life, what are you ? Where goes this breath ? This I so much alive ? In what element will it mix, giving and receiving fresh energy ? " And sometimes she forgot to look at the sunset and looked instead at the Baron Wolzogen. Dorothy, on the other hand, noted what was before her accurately, literally, and with prosaic precision. " The walk very pleasing between Hamburg and Altona. A large piece of ground planted



with trees, and intersected by gravel walks. . . . The ground on the opposite side of the Elbe appears marshy." Dorothy never railed against "the cloven hoof of despotism." Dorothy never asked "men's questions" about exports and imports; Dorothy never confused her own soul with the sky. This "*I* so much alive" was ruthlessly subordinated to the trees and the grass. For if she let "*I*" and its rights and its wrongs and its passions and its suffering get between her and the object, she would be calling the moon "the Queen of the Night;" she would be talking of dawn's "orient beams;" she would be soaring into reveries and rhapsodies and forgetting to find the exact phrase for the ripple of moonlight upon the lake. It was like "*herrings in the water*"—she could not have said that if she had been thinking about herself. So while Mary dashed her head against wall after wall, and cried out, "Surely something resides in this heart that is not perishable—and life is more than a dream," Dorothy went on methodically at Alfoxden noting the approach of spring. "The sloe in blossom, the hawthorn green, the larches in the park changed from black to green, in two or three days." And next day, 14th April, 1798, "the evening very stormy, so we staid.

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indoors. Mary Wollstonecraft's life, &c., came." And the day after they walked in the squire's grounds and noticed that "Nature was very successfully striving to make beautiful what art had deformed—ruins, hermitages, &c., &c." There is no reference to Mary Wollstonecraft ; it seems as if her life and all its storms had been swept away in one of those compendious *et ceteras*, and yet the next sentence reads like an unconscious comment. "Happily we cannot shape the huge hills, or carve out the valleys according to our fancy." No, we cannot re-form, we must not rebel ; we can only accept and try to understand the message of Nature. And so the notes go on.

Spring passed ; summer came ; summer turned to autumn ; it was winter, and then again the sloes were in blossom and the hawthorns green and spring had come. But it was spring in the North now, and Dorothy was living alone with her brother in a small cottage at Grasmere in the midst of the hills. Now after the hardships and separations of youth they were together under their own roof; now they could address themselves undisturbed to the absorbing occupation of living in the heart of Nature and trying, day by day, to read her meaning. They had money enough



at last to let them live together without the need of earning a penny. No family duties or professional tasks distracted them. Dorothy could ramble all day on the hills and sit up talking to Coleridge all night without being scolded by her aunt for unwomanly behaviour. The hours were theirs from sunrise to sunset, and could be altered to suit the season. If it was fine, there was no need to come in ; if it was wet, there was no need to get up. One could go to bed at any hour. One could let the dinner cool if the cuckoo were shouting on the hill and William had not found the exact epithet he wanted. Sunday was a day like any other. Custom, convention, everything was subordinated to the absorbing, exacting, exhausting task of living in the heart of Nature and writing poetry. For exhausting it was. William would make his head ache in the effort to find the right word. He would go on hammering at a poem until Dorothy was afraid to suggest an alteration. A chance phrase of hers would run in his head and make it impossible for him to get back into the proper mood. He would come down to breakfast and sit "with his shirt neck unbuttoned, and his waistcoat open," writing a poem on a Butterfly which some story of hers had suggested, and he would eat nothing.

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and then he would begin altering the poem and again would be exhausted.

It is strange how vividly all this is brought before us, considering that the diary is made up of brief notes such as any quiet woman might make of her garden's changes and her brother's moods and the progress of the seasons. It was warm and mild, she notes, after a day of rain. She met a cow in a field. "The cow looked at me, and I looked at the cow, and whenever I stirred the cow gave over eating." She met an old man who walked with two sticks—for days on end she met nothing more out of the way than a cow eating and an old man walking. And her motives for writing are common enough—"because I will not quarrel with myself, and because I shall give William pleasure by it when he comes home again." It is only gradually that the difference between this rough notebook and others discloses itself; only by degrees that the brief notes unfurl in the mind and open a whole landscape before us, that the plain statement proves to be aimed so directly at the object that if we look exactly along the line that it points we shall see precisely what she saw. "The moonlight lay upon the hills like snow." "The air was become still, the lake of a bright slate colour, the



bills darkening. The bays shot into the low fading shores. Sheep resting. All things quiet."

"There was no one waterfall above another—it was the sound of waters in the air—the voice of the air." Even in such brief notes one feels the suggestive power which is the gift of the poet rather than of the naturalist, the power which, taking only the simplest facts, so orders them that the whole scene comes before us, heightened and composed, the lake in its quiet, the hills in their splendour. Yet she was no descriptive writer in the usual sense. Her first concern was to be truthful—grace and symmetry must be made subordinate to truth. But then truth is sought because to falsify the look of the stir of the breeze on the lake is to tamper with the spirit which inspires appearances. It is that spirit which goads her and urges her and keeps her faculties for ever on the stretch. A sight or a sound would not let her be till she had traced her perception along its course and fixed it in words, though they might be bald, or in an image, though it might be angular. Nature was a stern taskmistress. The exact prosaic detail must be rendered as well as the vast and visionary outline. Even when the distant hills trembled before her in the glory of a dream she must note with literal

accuracy "the glittering silver line on the ridge of the backs of the sheep," or remark how "the crows at a little distance from us became white as silver as they flew in the sunshine, and when they went still further, they looked like shapes of water passing over the green fields." Always trained and in use, her powers of observation became in time so expert and so acute that a day's walk stored her mind's eye with a vast assembly of curious objects to be sorted at leisure. How strange the sheep looked mixed with the soldiers at Dumbarton Castle ! For some reason the sheep looked their real size, but the soldiers looked like puppets. And then the movements of the sheep were so natural and fearless, and the motion of the dwarf soldiers was so restless and apparently without meaning. It was extremely queer. Or lying in bed she would look up at the ceiling and think how the varnished beams were "as glossy as black rocks on a sunny day cased in ice." Yes, they

crossed each other in almost as intricate and fantastic a manner as I have seen the underboughs of a large beech-tree withered by the depth of the shade above.

. . . It was like what I should suppose an underground cave or temple to be, with a dripping or moist roof, and the moonlight entering in upon it by some



means or other, and yet the colours were more like melted gems. I lay looking up till the light of the fire faded away.....I did not sleep much.

Indeed, she scarcely seemed to shut her eyes. They looked and they looked, urged on not only by an indefatigable curiosity but also by reverence, as if some secret of the utmost importance lay hidden beneath the surface. Her pen sometimes stammers with the intensity of the emotion that she controlled, as De Quincey said that her tongue stammered with the conflict between her ardour and her shyness when she spoke. But controlled she was. Emotional and impulsive by nature, her eyes " wild and starting," tormented by feelings which almost mastered her, still she must control, still she must repress, or she would fail in her task—she would cease to see. But if one subdued oneself, and resigned one's private agitations, then, as if in reward, Nature would bestow an exquisite satisfaction. " Rydale was very beautiful, with spear-shaped streaks of polished steel. . . . It calls home the heart to quietness. I had been very melancholy," she wrote. For did not Coleridge come walking over the hills and tap at the cottage door late at night—did she not carry a letter from Coleridge hidden safe in her bosom ?



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Thus giving to Nature, thus receiving from Nature, it seemed, as the arduous and ascetic days went by, that Nature and Dorothy had grown together in perfect sympathy—a sympathy not cold or vegetable or inhuman because at the core of it burnt that other love for "my beloved," her brother, who was indeed its heart and inspiration. William and Nature and Dorothy herself, were they not one being? Did they not compose a trinity, self-contained and self-sufficient and independent whether indoors or out? They sit indoors. It was

about ten o'clock and a quiet night. The fire flickers and the watch ticks. I hear nothing but the breathing of my Beloved as he now and then pushes his book forward, and turns over a leaf.

And now it is an April day, and they take the old cloak and lie in John's grove out of doors together.

William heard me breathing, and rustling now and then, but we both lay still and unseen by one another. He thought that it would be sweet thus to lie in the grave, to hear the peaceful sounds of the earth, and just to know that our dear friends were near. The lake was still; there was a boat out.

It was a strange love, profound, almost dumb,



as if brother and sister had grown together and shared not the speech but the mood, so that they hardly knew which felt, which spoke, which saw the daffodils or the sleeping city ; only Dorothy stored the mood in prose, and later William came and bathed in it and made it into poetry. But one could not act without the other. They must feel, they must think, they must be together. So now, when they had lain out on the hill-side they would rise and go home and make tea, and Dorothy would write to Coleridge, and they would sow the scarlet beans together, and William would work at his "*Leech Gatherer*," and Dorothy would copy the lines for him. Rapt but controlled, free yet strictly ordered, the homely narrative moves naturally from ecstasy on the hills to baking bread and ironing linen and fetching William his supper in the cottage.

The cottage, though its garden ran up into the fells, was on the highroad. Through her parlour window Dorothy looked out and saw whoever might be passing—a tall beggar woman perhaps with her baby on her back ; an old soldier ; a coroneted landau with touring ladies peering inquisitively inside. The rich and the great she would let pass—they interested her no more than cathedrals or picture galleries or great cities ;

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but she could never see a beggar at the door without asking him in and questioning him closely. Where had he been ? What had he seen ? How many children had he ? She searched into the lives of the poor as if they held in them the same secret as the hills. A tramp eating cold bacon over the kitchen fire might have been a starry night, so closely she watched him ; so clearly she noted how his old coat was patched " with three bell-shaped patches of darker blue behind, where the buttons had been," how his beard of a fortnight's growth was like "*grey plush.*" And then as they rambled on with their tales of seafaring and the pressgang and the Marquis of Granby, she never failed to capture the one phrase that sounds on in the mind after the story is forgotten, " What, you are stepping westward ?" " To be sure there is great promise for virgins in Heaven." " She could trip lightly by the graves of those who died when they were young." The poor had their poetry as the hills had theirs. But it was out of doors, on the road or on the moor, not in the cottage parlour, that her imagination had freest play. Her happiest moments were passed tramping beside a jibbing horse on a wet Scottish road without certainty of bed or supper. All she knew was that there was some sight ahead,



some grove of trees to be noted, some waterfall to be inquired into. On they tramped hour after hour in silence for the most part, though Coleridge, who was of the party, would suddenly begin to debate aloud the true meaning of the words majestic, sublime, and grand. They had to trudge on foot because the horse had thrown the cart over a bank and the harness was only mended with string and pocket-handkerchiefs. They were hungry, too, because Wordsworth had dropped the chicken and the bread into the lake, and they had nothing else for dinner. They were uncertain of the way, and did not know where they would find lodgings: all they knew was that there was a waterfall ahead. At last Coleridge could stand it no longer. He had rheumatism in the joints; the Irish jaunting car provided no shelter from the weather; his companions were silent and absorbed. He left them. But William and Dorothy tramped on. They looked like tramps themselves. Dorothy's cheeks were brown as a gipsy's, her clothes were shabby, her gait was rapid and ungainly. But still she was indefatigable; her eye never failed her; she noticed everything. At last they reached the waterfall. And then all Dorothy's powers fell upon it. She searched out its character, she noted its resem-

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blances, she defined its differences, with all the ardour of a discoverer, with all the exactness of a naturalist, with all the rapture of a lover. She possessed it at last—she had laid it up in her mind for ever. It had become one of those "inner visions" which she could call to mind at any time in their distinctness and in their particularity. It would come back to her long years afterwards when she was old and her mind had failed her ; it would come back stilled and heightened and mixed with all the happiest memories of her past—with the thought of Race-down and Alfoxden and Coleridge reading "Christabel," and her beloved, her brother William. It would bring with it what no human being could give, what no human relation could offer—consolation and quiet. If, then, the passionate cry of Mary Wollstonecraft had reached her ears—"Surely something resides in this heart that is not perishable—and life is more than a dream"—she would have had no doubt whatever as to her answer. She would have said quite simply, "We looked about us, and felt that we were happy."

Virginia Woolf.



HOW SHOULD ONE READ A BOOK ?

In the first place, I want to emphasise the note of interrogation at the end of my title. Even if I could answer the question for myself, the answer would apply only to me and not to you. The only advice, indeed, that one person can give another about reading is to take no advice, to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions. If this is agreed between us, then I feel at liberty to put forward a few ideas and suggestions because you will not allow them to fetter that independence which is the most important quality that a reader can possess. After all, what laws can be laid down about books ? The battle of Waterloo was certainly fought on a certain day ; but is *Hamlet* a better play than *Lear* ? Nobody can say. Each must decide that question for himself. To admit authorities, however heavily furred and gowned, into our libraries and let them tell us how to read, what to read, what value to place upon what we read, is to destroy the spirit of freedom which is the breath of those sanctuaries. Everywhere else we may be bound by laws and conventions—there we have none.

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But to enjoy freedom, if the platitude is pardonable, we have of course to control ourselves. We must not squander our powers, helplessly and ignorantly, squirting half the house in order to water a single rose-bush ; we must train them, exactly and powerfully, here on the very spot. This, it may be, is one of the first difficulties that faces us in a library. What is 'the very spot?' There may well seem to be nothing but a conglomeration and huddle of confusion. Poems and novels, histories and memoirs, dictionaries and blue-books ; books written in all languages by men and women of all tempers, races, and ages jostle each other on the shelf. And outside the donkey brays, the women gossip at the pump, the colts gallop across the fields. Where are we to begin ? How are we to bring order into this multitudinous chaos and so get the deepest and widest pleasure from what we read?

It is simple enough to say that since books have classes—fiction, biography, poetry—we should separate them and take from each what it is right that each should give us. Yet few people ask from books what books can give us. Most commonly we come to books with blurred and divided minds, asking of fiction that it shall be true, of poetry that it shall be false, of biography that it



shall be flattering, of history that it shall enforce our own prejudices. If we could banish all such preconceptions when we read, that would be an admirable beginning. Do not dictate to your author ; try to become him. Be his fellow-worker and accomplice. If you hang back, and reserve and criticise at first, you are preventing yourself from getting the fullest possible value from what you read. But if you open your mind as widely as possible, then signs and hints of almost imperceptible fineness, from the twist and turn of the first sentences, will bring you into the presence of a human being unlike any other. Steep yourself in this, acquaint yourself with this, and soon you will find that your author is giving you, or attempting to give you, something far more definite. The thirty-two chapters of a novel—if we consider how to read a novel first—are an attempt to make something as formed and controlled as a building : but words are more impalpable than bricks ; reading is a longer and more complicated process than seeing. Perhaps the quickest way to understand the elements of what a novelist is doing is not to read, but to write ; to make your own experiment with the dangers and difficulties of words. Recall, then, some event that has left a distinct impression on



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you—how at the corner of the street, perhaps, you passed two people talking. A tree shook ; an electric light danced ; the tone of the talk was comic, but also tragic ; a whole vision, an entire conception, seemed contained in that moment.

But when you attempt to reconstruct it in words, you will find that it breaks into a thousand conflicting impressions. Some must be subdued ; others emphasised ; in the process you will lose, probably, all grasp upon the emotion itself. Then turn from your blurred and littered pages to the opening pages of some great novelist—Defoe, Jane Austen, Hardy. Now you will be better able to appreciate their mastery. It is not merely that we are in the presence of a different person—Defoe, Jane Austen, or Thomas Hardy—but that we are living in a different world. Here, in *Robinson Crusoe*, we are trudging a plain high road ; one thing happens after another ; the fact and the order of the fact is enough. But if the open air and adventure mean everything to Defoe they mean nothing to Jane Austen. Hers is the drawing-room, and people talking, and by the many mirrors of their talk revealing their characters. And if, when we have accustomed ourselves to the drawing-room and its reflections, we turn



to Hardy, we are once more spun round. The moors are round us and the stars are above our heads. The other side of the mind is now exposed—the dark side that comes uppermost in solitude, not the light side that shows in company. Our relations are not towards people, but towards Nature and destiny. Yet different as these worlds are, each is consistent with itself. The maker of each is careful to observe the laws of his own perspective, and however great a strain they may put upon us they will never confuse us, as lesser writers so frequently do, by introducing two different kinds of reality into the same book. Thus to go from one great novelist to another—from Jane Austen to Hardy, from Peacock to Trollope, from Scott to Meredith—is to be wrench-ed and uprooted ; to be thrown this way and then that. To read a novel is a difficult and complex art. You must be capable not only of great fine-ness of perception, but of great boldness of ima-gination if you are going to make use of all that the novelist—the great artist—gives you.

But a glance at the heterogeneous company on the shelf will show you that writers are very seldom 'great artists'; far more often a book makes no claims to be a work of art at all. These bio-graphies and autobiographies, for example, lives

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of great men, of men long dead and forgotten, that stand cheek by jowl with the novels and poems, are we to refuse to read them because they are not 'art' ? Or shall we read them, but read them in a different way, with a different aim ? Shall we read them in the first place to satisfy that curiosity which possesses us sometimes when in the evening we linger in front of a house where the lights are lit and the blinds not yet drawn, and each floor of the house shows us a different section of human life in being ? Then we are consumed with curiosity about the lives of these people—the servants gossiping, the gentlemen dining, the girl dressing for a party, the old woman at the window with her knitting. Who are they, what are they, what are their names, their occupations, their thoughts, and adventures ?

Biographies and memoirs answer such questions, light up innumerable such houses ; they show us people going about their daily affairs, toiling, failing, succeeding, eating, hating, loving, until they die. And sometimes as we watch, the house fades and the iron railings vanish and we are out at sea ; we are hunting, sailing, fighting ; we are among savages and soldiers ; we are taking part in great campaigns. Or if we like to stay here



in England, in London, still the scene changes ; the street narrows ; the house becomes small, cramped, diamond-paned, and malodorous. We see a poet, Donne, driven from such a house because the walls were so thin that when the children cried their voices cut through them. We can follow him, through the paths that lie in the pages of books, to Twickenham ; to Lady Bedford's Park, a famous meeting-ground for nobles and poets ; and then turn our steps to Wilton, the great house under the downs, and hear Sidney read the *Arcadia* to his sister ; and ramble among the very marshes and see the very herons that figure in that famous romance ; and then again travel north with that other Lady Pembroke, Anne Clifford, to her wild moors, or plunge into the city and control our merriment at the sight of Gabriel Harvey in his black velvet suit arguing about poetry with Spenser. Nothing is more fascinating than to grope and stumble in the alternate darkness and splendour of Elizabethan London. But there is no staying there. The Temples and the Swifts, the Harleys and the St. Johns beckon us on ; hour upon hour can be spent disentangling their quarrels and deciphering their characters ; and when we tire of them we can stroll on, past a lady in black wearing.

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diamonds, to Samuel Johnson and Goldsmith and Garrick ; or cross the channel, if we like, and meet Voltaire and Diderot, Madame du Deffand; and so back to England and Twickenham—how certain places repeat themselves and certain names !—where Lady Bedford had her Park once and Pope lived later, to Walpole's home at Strawberry Hill. But Walpole introduces us to such a swarm of new acquaintances, there are so many houses to visit and bells to ring that we may well hesitate for a moment, on the Miss Berrys' doorstep, for example, when behold, up comes Thackeray ; he is the friend of the woman whom Walpole loved ; so that merely by going from friend to friend, from garden to garden, from house to house, we have passed from one end of English literature to another and wake to find ourselves here again in the present, if we can so differentiate this moment from all that have gone before. This, then, is one of the ways in which we can read these lives and letters ; we can make them light up the many windows of the past ; we can watch the famous dead in their familiar habits and fancy sometimes that we are very close and can surprise their secrets, and sometimes we may pull out a play or a poem that they have written and see whether it reads



differently in the presence of the author. But this again rouses other questions. How far, we must ask ourselves, is a book influenced by its writer's life—how far is it safe to let the man interpret the writer? How far shall we resist or give way to the sympathies and antipathies that the man himself rouses in us—so sensitive are words, so receptive of the character of the author? These are questions that press upon us when we read lives and letters, and we must answer them for ourselves, for nothing can be more fatal than to be guided by the preferences of others in a matter so personal.

But also we can read such books with another aim, not to throw light on literature, not to become familiar with famous people, but to refresh and exercise our own creative powers. Is there not an open window on the right hand of the bookcase? How delightful to stop reading and look out! How stimulating the scene is, in its unconsciousness, its irrelevance, its perpetual movement—the colts galloping round the field, the woman filling her pail at the well, the donkey throwing back his head and emitting his long, acrid moan. The greater part of any library is nothing but the record of such fleeting moments in the lives of men, women, and



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donkeys. Every literature, as it grows old, has its rubbish-heap, its record of vanished moments and forgotten lives told in faltering and feeble accents that have perished. But if you give yourself up to the delight of rubbish-reading you will be surprised, indeed you will be overcome, by the relics of human life that have been cast out to moulder. It may be one letter—but what a vision it gives ! It may be a few sentences—but what vistas they suggest ! Sometimes a whole story will come together with such beautiful humour and pathos and completeness that it seems as if a great novelist had been at work, yet it is only an old actor, Tate Wilkinson, remembering the strange story of Captain Jones : it is only a young subaltern serving under Arthur Wellesley and falling in love with a pretty girl at Lisbon ; it is only Maria Allen letting fall her sewing in the empty drawing-room and sighing how she wishes she had taken Dr. Burney's good advice and had never eloped with her Rishy. None of this has any value ; it is negligible in the extreme ; yet how absorbing it is now and again to go through the rubbish-heaps and find rings and scissors and broken noses buried in the huge past and try to piece them together while the colt gallops round the field, the woman fills her pail at the well, and the donkey brays.

But we tire of rubbish-reading in the long run. We tire of searching for what is needed to complete the half-truth which is all that the Wilkinsons, the Bunburys, and the Maria Allens are able to offer us. They had not the artist's power of mastering and eliminating ; they could not tell the whole truth even about their own lives ; they have disfigured the story that might have been so shapely. Facts are all that they can offer us, and facts are a very inferior form of fiction. Thus the desire grows upon us to have done with half-statements and approximations ; to cease from searching out the minute shades of human character, to enjoy the greater abstractness, the purer truth of fiction. Thus we create the mood, intense and generalised, unaware of detail, but stressed by some regular, recurrent beat, whose natural expression is poetry ; and that is the time to read poetry when we are almost able to write it.

Western wind, when wilt thou blow ?
The small rain down can rain.
Christ, if my love were in my arms,
And I in my bed again !

The impact of poetry is so hard and direct that for the moment there is no other sensation

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except that of the poem itself. What profound depths we visit then—how sudden and complete is our immersion ! There is nothing here to catch hold of ; nothing to stay us in our flight. The illusion of fiction is gradual ; its effects are prepared ; but who when they read these four lines stops to ask who wrote them, or conjures up the thought of Donne's house or Sidney's secretary ; or enmeshes them in the intricacy of the past and the succession of generations ? The poet is always our contemporary. Our being for the moment is centred and constricted, as in any violent shock of personal emotion. Afterwards, it is true, the sensation begins to spread in wider rings through our minds ; remoter senses are reached ; these begin to sound and to comment and we are aware of echoes and reflections. The intensity of poetry covers an immense range of emotion. We have only to compare the force and directness of

I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,
Only remembering that I grieve,

with the wavering modulation of

Minutes are numbered by the fall of sands,
As by an hour glass ; the span of time



Doth waste us to our graves, and we look on it ;
An age of pleasure, revelled out, comes home
At last, and ends in sorrow ; but the life,
Weary of riot, numbers every sand,
Wailing in sighs, until the last drop down,
So to conclude calamity in rest,

or place the meditative calm of

whether we be young or old,
Our density. our being's heart and home,
Is with infinitude, and only there ;
With hope it is, hope that can never die,
Effort, and expectation, and desire,
And something evermore about to be,

beside the complete and inexhaustible loveliness of

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide :
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

or the splendid fantasy of

And the woodland haunter
Shall not cease to saunter
When, far down some glade,
Of the great world's burning,
One soft flame upturning
Seems, to his discerning,
Crocus in the shade,



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to bethink us of the varied art of the poet ; his power to make us at once actors and spectators ; his power to run his hand into character as if it were a glove, and be Falstaff or Lear ; his power to condense, to widen, to state, once and for ever.

" We have only to compare "—with those words the cat is out of the bag, and the true complexity of reading is admitted. The first process, to receive impressions with the utmost understanding, is only half the process of reading ; it must be completed, if we are to get the whole pleasure from a book, by another. We must pass judgment upon these multitudinous impressions ; we must make of these fleeting shapes one that is hard and lasting. But not directly. Wait for the dust of reading to settle ; for the conflict and the questioning to die down ; walk, talk, pull the dead petals from a rose, or fall asleep. Then suddenly without our willing it, for it is thus that Nature undertakes these transitions, the book will return, but differently. It will float to the top of the mind as a whole. And the book as a whole is different from the book received currently in separate phrases. Details now fit themselves into their places. We see the shape from start to finish ; it is a barn, a pig-sty, or a cathedral. Now then we can compare book



with book as we compare building with building. But this act of comparison means that our attitude has changed ; we are no longer the friends of the writer, but his judges ; and just as we cannot be too sympathetic as friends, so as judges we cannot be too severe. Are they not criminals, books that have wasted our time and sympathy ; are they not the most insidious enemies of society, corrupters, defilers, the writers of false books, faked books, books that fill the air with decay and disease ? Let us then be severe in our judgments ; let us compare each book with the greatest of its kind. There they hang in the mind the shapes of the books we have read solidified by the judgments we have passed on them—*Robinson Crusoe*, *Emma*, *The Return of the Native*. Compare the novels with these—even the latest and least of novels has a right to be judged with the best. And so with poetry—when the intoxication of rhythm has died down and the splendour of words has faded, a visionary shape will return to us and this must be compared with *Lear*, with *Phèdre*, with *The Prelude* ; or if not with these, with whatever is the best or seems to us to be the best in its own kind. And we may be sure that the newness of new poetry and fiction is its most superficial quality and that we have only to alter

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slightly, not to recast, the standards by which we have judged the old.

It would be foolish, then, to pretend that the second part of reading, to judge, to compare, is as simple as the first—to open the mind wide to the fast flocking of innumerable impressions. To continue reading without the book before you, to hold one shadow-shape against another, to have read widely enough and with enough understanding to make such comparisons alive and illuminating—that is difficult ; it is still more difficult to press further and to say, “ Not only is the book of this sort, but it is of this value : here it fails ; here it succeeds ; this is bad ; that is good.” To carry out this part of a reader’s duty needs such imagination, insight, and learning that it is hard to conceive any one mind sufficiently endowed ; impossible for the most self-confident to find more than the seeds of such powers in himself. Would it not be wiser, then, to remit this part of reading and to allow the critics, the gowned and furred authorities of the library, to decide the question of the book’s absolute value for us ? Yet how impossible ! We may stress the value of sympathy ; we may try to sink our own identity as we read. But we know that we cannot sympathise wholly or immerse ourselves wholly ; there is always



a demon in us who whispers, "I hate, I love," and we cannot silence him. Indeed, it is precisely because we hate and we love that our relation with the poets and novelists is so intimate that we find the presence of another person intolerable. And even if the results are abhorrent and our judgments are wrong, still our taste, the nerve of sensation that sends shocks through us, is our chief illuminant; we learn through feeling; we cannot suppress our own idiosyncrasy without impoverishing it. But as time goes on perhaps we can train our taste; perhaps we can make it submit to some control. When it has fed greedily and lavishly upon books of all sorts—poetry, fiction, history, biography—and has stopped reading and looked for long spaces upon the variety, the incongruity of the living world, we shall find that it is changing a little; it is not so greedy, it is more reflective. It will begin to bring us not merely judgments on particular books, but it will tell us that there is a quality common to certain books. Listen, it will say, what shall we call *this*? And it will read us perhaps *Lear* and then perhaps the *Agamemnon* in order to bring out that common quality. Thus, with our taste to guide us, we shall venture beyond the particular book in search of qualities that group



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books together ; we shall give them names and and thus frame a rule that brings order into our perceptions. We shall gain a further and a rarer pleasure from that discrimination. But as a rule only lives when it is perpetually broken by contact with the books themselves—nothing is easier and more stultifying than to make rules which exist out of touch with facts, in a vacuum—now at last, in order to steady ourselves in this difficult attempt, it may be well to turn to the very rare writers who are able to enlighten us upon literature as an art. Coleridge and Dryden and Johnson, in their considered criticism, the poets and novelists themselves in their unconsidered sayings, are often surprisingly relevant ; they light up and solidify the vague ideas that have been tumbling in the misty depths of our minds. But they are only able to help us if we come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading. They can do nothing for us if we herd ourselves under their authority and lie down like sheep in the shade of a hedge. We can only understand their ruling when it comes in conflict with our own and vanquishes it.

If this is so, if to read a book as it should be read calls for the rarest qualities of imagination,



insight, and judgment, you may perhaps conclude that literature is a very complex art and that it is unlikely that we shall be able, even after a life-time of reading, to make any valuable contribution to its criticism. We must remain readers ; we shall not put on the further glory that belongs to those rare beings who are also critics. But still we have our responsibilities as readers and even our importance. The standards we raise and the judgments we pass steal into the air and become part of the atmosphere which writers breathe as they work. An influence is created which tells upon them even if it never finds its way into print. And that influence, if it were well instructed, vigorous and individual and sincere, might be of great value now when criticism is necessarily in abeyance ; when books pass in review like the procession of animals in a shooting gallery, and the critic has only one second in which to load and aim and shoot and may well be pardoned if he mistakes rabbits for tigers, eagles for barndoors, fowls, or misses altogether and wastes his shot upon some peaceful cow grazing in a further field. If behind the erratic gunfire of the press the author felt that there was another kind of criticism, the opinion of people reading for the love of reading, slowly and unprofessionally, and judging with



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great sympathy and yet with great severity, might this not improve the quality of his work ? And if by our means books were to become stronger, richer, and more varied, that would be an end worth reaching.

Yet who reads to bring about an end, however desirable ? Are there not some pursuits that we practise because they are good in themselves, and some pleasures that are final ? And is not this among them ? I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgment dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards—their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble—the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy when He sees us coming with our books under our arms, “ Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading.”

Virginia Woolf.



THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER

There was a woman who was beautiful, who started with all the advantages, yet she had no luck. She married for love, and the love turned to dust. She had bonny children, yet she felt they had been thrust upon her, and she could not love them. They looked at her coldly, as if they were finding fault with her. And hurriedly she felt she must cover up some fault in herself. Yet what it was that she must cover up she never knew. Nevertheless, when her children were present, she always felt the centre of her heart go hard. This troubled her, and in her manner she was all the more gentle and anxious for her children, as if she loved them very much. Only she herself knew that at the centre of her heart was a hard little place that could not feel love, no, not for anybody. Everybody else said of her: "She is such a good mother. She adores her children." Only she herself, and her children themselves, knew it was not so. They read it in each other's eyes.

There were a boy and two little girls. They lived in a pleasant house, with a garden, and they



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had discreet servants, and felt themselves superior to anyone in the neighbourhood.

Although they lived in style, they felt always an anxiety in the house. There was never enough money. The mother had a small income, and the father had a small income, but not nearly enough for the social position which they had to keep up. The father went in to town to some office. But though he had good prospects, these prospects never materialised. There was always the grinding sense of the shortage of money, though the style was always kept up.

At last the mother said, "*I will see if I can't make something.*" But she did not know where to begin. She racked her brains, and tried this thing and the other, but could not find anything successful. The failure made deep lines come into her face. Her children were growing up, they would have to go to school. There must be more money, there must be more money. The father, who was always very handsome and expensive in his tastes, seemed as if he never *would* be able to do anything worth doing. And the mother, who had a great belief in herself, did not succeed any better, and her tastes were just as expensive.

And so the house came to be haunted by the



unspoken phrase: *There must be more money!* *There must be more money!* The children could hear it all the time, though nobody said it aloud. They heard it at Christmas, when the expensive and splendid toys filled the nursery. Behind the shining modern rocking-horse, behind the smart doll's-house, a voice would start whispering: “*There must be more money!* *There must be more money!*” And the children would stop playing, to listen for a moment. They would look into each other's eyes, to see if they had all heard. And each one saw in the eyes of the other two that they too had heard. “*There must be more money!* *There must be more money!*”

It came whispering from the springs of the still-swaying rocking-horse, and even the horse, bending his wooden, champing head, heard it. The big doll, sitting so pink and smirking in her new pram, could hear it quite plainly, and seemed to be smirking all the more self-consciously because of it. The foolish puppy, too, that took the place of the teddy-bear, he was looking so extraordinarily foolish for no other reason but that he heard the secret whisper all over the house: “*There must be more money!*”

Yet nobody ever said it aloud. The whisper was everywhere, and therefore no one spoke it.



THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 405

Just as no one ever says: "We are breathing!" in spite of the fact that breath is coming and going all the time.

"Mother," said the boy Paul one day, "why don't we keep a car of our own? Why do we always use uncle's, or else a taxi?"

"Because we're the poor members of the family," said the mother.

"But why *are* we, mother?"

"Well,—I suppose," she said slowly and bitterly, "it's because your father has no luck."

The boy was silent for some time.

"Is luck money, mother?" he asked, rather timidly.

"No, Paul. Not quite. It's what causes you to have money."

"Oh!" said Paul vaguely. "I thought when Uncle Oscar said *filthy lucre*, it meant money."

"*Filthy lucre* does mean money," said the mother. "But it's lucre, not luck."

"Oh!" said the boy. "Then what *is* luck, mother?"

"It's what causes you to have money. If you're lucky you have money. That's why it's better to be born lucky than rich. If you're rich, you may lose your money. But if you're lucky, you will always get more money."



"Oh! Will you? And is father not lucky?"

"Very unlucky, I should say," she said bitterly.

The boy watched her with unsure eyes.

"Why?" he asked.

"I don't know. Nobody ever knows why one person is lucky and another unlucky."

"Don't they? Nobody at all? Does *nobody* know?"

"Perhaps God. But He never tells."

"He ought to, then. And aren't you lucky either, mother?"

"I can't be, if I married an unlucky husband."

"But by yourself, aren't you?"

"I used to think I was, before I married. Now I think I am very unlucky indeed."

"Why?"

"Well—never mind! Perhaps I'm not really," she said.

The child looked at her, to see if she meant it. But he saw, by the lines of her mouth, that she was only trying to hide something from him.

"Well, anyhow," he said stoutly, "I'm a lucky person."



THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 407

"Why?" said his mother, with a sudden laugh.

He stared at her. He didn't even know why he had said it.

"God told me," he asserted, brazening it out.

"I hope He did, dear!" she said, again with a laugh, but rather bitter.

"He did, mother!"

"Excellent!" said the mother, using one of her husband's exclamations.

The boy saw she did not believe him; or rather, that she paid no attention to his assertion. This angered him somewhere, and made him want to compel her attention.

He went off by himself, vaguely, in a childish way, seeking for the clue to "luck." Absorbed, taking no heed of other people, he went about with a sort of stealth, seeking inwardly for luck. He wanted luck, he wanted it, he wanted it. When the two girls were playing dolls in the nursery, he would sit on his big rocking-horse, charging madly into space, with a frenzy that made the little girls peer at him uneasily. Wildly the horse careered, the waving dark hair of the boy tossed, his eyes had a strange glare in them. The little girls dared not speak to him.



When he had ridden to the end of his mad little journey, he climbed down and stood in front of his rocking-horse, staring fixedly into its lowered face. Its red mouth was slightly open, its big eye was wide and glassy-bright.

"Now!" he would silently command the snorting steed. "Now, take me to where there is luck! Now take me!"

And he would slash the horse on the neck with the little whip he had asked Uncle Oscar for. He knew the horse could take him to where there was luck, if only he forced it. So he would mount again, and start on his furious ride, hoping at last to get there. He knew he could get there.

"You'll break your horse, Paul!" said the nurse.

"He's always riding like that! I wish he'd leave off!" said his elder sister Joan.

But he only glared down on them in silence. Nurse gave him up. She could make nothing of him. Anyhow he was growing beyond her.

One day his mother and his Uncle Oscar came in when he was on one of his furious rides. He did not speak to them.

"Hallo, you young jockey! Riding a winner?" said his uncle.

THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 409

"Aren't you growing too big for a rocking-horse? You're not a very little boy any longer, you know," said his mother.

But Paul only gave a blue glare from his big, rather close-set eyes. He would speak to nobody when he was in full tilt. His mother watched him with an anxious expression on her face.

At last he suddenly stopped forcing his horse into the mechanical gallop, and slid down.

"Well, I got there!" he announced fiercely, his blue eyes still flaring, and his sturdy long legs straddling apart.

"Where did you get to?" asked his mother.

"Where I wanted to go," he flared back at her.

"That's right, son!" said Uncle Oscar.

"Don't you stop till you get there. What's the horse's name?"

"He doesn't have a name," said the boy.

"Gets on without all right?" asked the uncle.

"Well, he has different names. He was called Sansovino last week."

"Sansovino, eh? Won the Ascot. How did you know his name?"

"He always talks about horse-races with Bassett," said Joan.



The uncle was delighted to find that his small nephew was posted with all the racing news. Bassett, the young gardener, who had been wounded in the left foot in the war and had got his present job through Oscar Cresswell, whose batman he had been, was a perfect blade of the 'turf.' He lived in the racing events, and the small boy lived with him.

Oscar Cresswell got it all from Bassett.

"Master Paul comes and asks me, so I can't do more than tell him, sir," said Bassett, his face terribly serious, as if he were speaking of religious matters.

"And does he ever put anything on a horse he fancies?"

"Well—I don't want to give him away—he's a young sport, a fine sport, sir. Would you mind asking him himself? He sort of takes a pleasure in it, and perhaps he'd feel I was giving him away, sir, if you don't mind."

Bassett was serious as a church.

The uncle went back to his nephew, and took him off for a ride in the car.

"Say, Paul, old man, do you ever put anything on a horse?" the uncle asked.

The boy watched the handsome man closely.



THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 411

"Why, do you think I oughtn't to?" he parried.

"Not a bit of it! I thought perhaps you might give me a tip for the Lincoln."

The car sped on into the country, going down to Uncle Oscar's place in Hampshire.

"Honour bright?" said the nephew.

"Honour bright, son!" said the uncle.

"Well, then, Daffodil."

"Daffodil! I doubt it, sonny. What about Mirza?"

"I only know the winner," said the boy.
"That's Daffodil."

"Daffodil, eh?"

There was a pause. Daffodil was an obscure horse comparatively.

"Uncle!"

"Yes, son?"

"You won't let it go any further, will you? I promised Bassett."

"Bassett be damned, old man! What's he got to do with it?"

"We're partners. We've been partners from the first. Uncle, he lent me my first five shillings, which I lost. I promised him, honour bright, it was only between me and him; only you gave me that ten-shilling note I started win-



ning with, so I thought you were lucky. You won't let it go any further, will you ? "

The boy gazed at his uncle from those big, hot, blue eyes, set rather close together. The uncle stirred and laughed uneasily.

" Right you are, son ! I'll keep your tip private. Daffodil, eh ? How much are you putting on him ? "

" All except twenty pounds," said the boy.
" I keep that in reserve."

The uncle thought it a good joke.

" You keep twenty pounds in reserve, do you, you young romancer ? What are you betting, then ? "

" I'm betting three hundred," said the boy gravely. " But it's between you and me, Uncle Oscar ! Honour bright ? "

The uncle burst into a roar of laughter.

" It's between you and me all right, you young Nat Gould," he said, laughing. " But where's your three hundred ? "

" Bassett keeps it for me. We're partners."

" You are, are you ! And what is Bassett putting on Daffodil ? "

" He won't go quite as high as I do, I expect. Perhaps he'll go a hundred and fifty."

" What, pennies ? " laughed the uncle.

THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 413

"Pounds," said the child, with a surprised look at his uncle. "Bassett keeps a bigger reserve than I do."

Between wonder and amusement Uncle Oscar was silent. He pursued the matter no further, but he determined to take his nephew with him to the Lincoln races.

"Now, son," he said, "I'm putting twenty on Mirza, and I'll put five for you on any horse you fancy. What's your pick?"

"Daffodil, uncle."

"No, not the fiver on Daffodil!"

"I should if it was my own fiver," said the child.

"Good! Good! Right you are! A fiver for me and a fiver for you on Daffodil."

The child had never been to a race-meeting before, and his eyes were blue fire. He pursed his mouth tight, and watched. A Frenchman just in front had put his money on Lancelot. Wild with excitement, he flayed his arms up and down, yelling "*Lancelot! Lancelot!*" in his French accent.

Daffodil came in first, Lancelot second, Mirza third. The child, flushed and with eyes blazing, was curiously serene. His uncle brought him four five-pound notes, four to one.



"What am I to do with these?" he cried, waving them before the boy's eyes.

"I suppose we'll talk to Bassett," said the boy. "I expect I have fifteen hundred now; and twenty in reserve; and this twenty."

His uncle studied him for some moments.

"Look here, son!" he said. "You're not serious about Bassett and that fifteen hundred, are you?"

"Yes, I am. But it's between you and me, uncle. Honour bright!"

"Honour bright all right, son! But I must talk to Bassett."

"If you'd like to be a partner, uncle, with Bassett and me, we could all be partners. Only, you'd have to promise, honour bright, uncle, not to let it go beyond us three. Bassett and I are lucky, and you must be lucky, because it was your ten shillings I started winning with...."

Uncle Oscar took both Bassett and Paul into Richmond Park for an afternoon, and there they talked.

"It's like this, you see, sir," Bassett said. "Master Paul would get me talking about racing events, spinning yarns, you know, sir. And he was always keen on knowing if I'd made or if I'd lost. It's about a year since, now, that I put

THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 415

five shillings on Blush of Dawn for him: and we lost. Then the luck turned, with that ten shillings he had from you: that we put on Singhalese. And since that time, it's been pretty steady, all things considering. What do you say, Master Paul?"

"We're all right when we're sure," said Paul. "It's when we're not quite sure that we go down."

"Oh, but we're careful then," said Bassett.

"But when are you *sure*?" smiled Uncle Oscar.

"It's Master Paul, sir," said Bassett, in a secret, religious voice. "It's as if he had it from heaven. Like Daffodil, now, for the Lincoln. That was as sure as eggs."

"Did you put anything on Daffodil?" asked Oscar Cresswell.

"Yes, sir. I made my bit."

"And my nephew?"

Bassett was obstinately silent, looking at Paul.

"I made twelve hundred, didn't I, Bassett? I told uncle I was putting three hundred on Daffodil."

"That's right," said Bassett, nodding.

"But where's the money?" asked the uncle.

"I keep it safe locked up, sir. Master Paul he can have it any minute he likes to ask for it."



"What, fifteen hundred pounds?"

"And twenty! And *forty*, that is, with the twenty he made on the course."

"It's amazing!" said the uncle.

"If Master Paul offers you to be partners, sir, I would; if I were you: if you'll excuse me," said Bassett.

Oscar Cresswell thought about it.

"I'll see the money," he said.

They drove home again, and, sure enough, Bassett came round to the garden-house with fifteen hundred pounds in notes. The twenty pounds reserve was left with Joe Glee, in the Turf Commission deposit.

"You see, it's all right, uncle, when I'm *sure*! Then we go strong, for all we're worth. Don't we, Bassett?"

"We do that, Master Paul."

"And when are you *sure*?" said the uncle, laughing.

"Oh, well, sometimes I'm *absolutely* *sure*, like about Daffodil," said the boy; "and sometimes I have an idea; and sometimes I haven't even an idea, have I, Bassett? Then we're careful, because we mostly go down."

"You do, do you! And when you're *sure*, like about Daffodil, what makes you *sure*, sonny?"



THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 417

"Oh, well, I don't know," said the boy uneasily. "I'm sure, you know, uncle ; that's all."

"It's as if he had it from heaven, sir," Bassett reiterated.

"I should say so !" said the uncle.

But he became a partner. And when the Leger was coming on, Paul was "sure" about Lively Spark, which was a quite inconsiderable horse. The boy insisted on putting a thousand on the horse, Bassett went for five hundred, and Oscar Cresswell two hundred. Lively Spark came in first, and the betting had been ten to one against him. Paul had made ten thousand.

"You see," he said, "I was absolutely sure of him."

Even Oscar Cresswell had cleared two thousand.

"Look here, son," he said, "this sort of thing makes me nervous."

"It needn't, uncle ! Perhaps I shan't be sure again for a long time "

"But what are you going to do with your money ?" asked the uncle.

"Of course," said the boy, "I started it for mother. She said she had no luck, because father is unlucky, so I thought if I was lucky, it might stop whispering."



"What might stop whispering?"

"Our house. I *hate* our house for whispering."

"What does it whisper?"

"Why—why"—the boy fidgeted—"why, I don't know. But it's always short of money, you know, uncle."

"I know it, son, I know it."

"You know people send mother writs, don't you, uncle?"

"I'm afraid I do," said the uncle.

"And then the house whispers, like people laughing at you behind your back. It's awful, that is! I thought if I was lucky—"

"You might stop it," added the uncle.

The boy watched him with big blue eyes, that had an uncanny cold fire in them, and he said never a word.

"Well, then!" said the uncle. "What are we doing?"

"I shouldn't like mother to know I was lucky," said the boy.

"Why not, son?"

"She'd stop me."

"I don't think she would."

"Oh!"—and the boy writhed in an odd way—"I *don't* want her to know, uncle."

THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 419

"All right, son ! We'll manage it without her knowing."

They managed it very easily. Paul, at the other's suggestion, handed over five thousand pounds to his uncle, who deposited it with the family lawyer, who was then to inform Paul's mother that a relative had put five thousand pounds into his hands, which sum was to be paid out a thousand pounds at a time, on the mother's birthday, for the next five years.

"So she'll have a birthday present of a thousand pounds for five successive years," said Uncle Oscar. "I hope it won't make it all the harder for her later."

Paul's mother had her birthday in November. The house had been "whispering" worse than ever lately, and, even in spite of his luck, Paul could not bear up against it. He was very anxious to see the effect of the birthday letter, telling his mother about the thousand pounds.

When there were no visitors, Paul now took his meals with his parents, as he was beyond the nursery control. His mother went into town nearly every day. She had discovered that she had an odd knack of sketching furs and dress materials, so she worked secretly in the studio of a friend who was the chief "artist" for the leading



drapers. She drew the figures of ladies in furs and ladies in silk and sequins for the newspaper advertisements. This young woman artist earned several thousand pounds a year, but Paul's mother only made several hundreds, and she was again dissatisfied. She so wanted to be first in something, and she did not succeed, even in making sketches for drapery advertisements.

She was down to breakfast on the morning of her birthday. Paul watched her face as she read her letters. He knew the lawyer's letter. As his mother read it, her face hardened and became more expressionless. Then a cold, determined look came on her mouth. She hid the letter under the pile of others, and said not a word about it.

" Didn't you have anything nice in the post for your birthday, mother ? " said Paul.

" Quite moderately nice," she said, her voice cold and absent.

She went away to town without saying more.

But in the afternoon Uncle Oscar appeared. He said Paul's mother had had a long interview with the lawyer, asking if the whole five thousand could not be advanced at once, as she was in debt.

" What do you think, uncle ? " said the boy.

" I leave it to you, son."



THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 421

"Oh, let her have it, then ! We can get some more with the other," said the boy.

"A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, Laddie !" said Uncle Oscar.

"But I'm sure to *know* for the Grand National ; or the Lincolnshire ; or else the Derby. I'm sure to know for *one* of them," said Paul.

So Uncle Oscar signed the agreement, and Paul's mother touched the whole five thousand. Then something very curious happened. The voices in the house suddenly went mad, like a chorus of frogs on a spring evening. There were certain new furnishings, and Paul had a tutor. He was *really* going to Eton, his father's school, in the following autumn. There were flowers in the winter, and a blossoming of the luxury Paul's mother had been used to. And yet the voices in the house, behind the sprays of mimosa and almond-blossom, and from under the piles of iridescent cushions, simply trilled and screamed in a sort of ecstasy : "There *must* be more money ! Oh-h-h ; there *must* be more money. Oh, now, now-w ! Now-w-w—there *must* be more money !—more than ever ! More than ever !"

It frightened Paul terribly. He studied away at his Latin and Greek with his tutors. But his intense hours were spent with Bassett. The



Grand National had gone by : he had not "known," and had lost a hundred pounds. Summer was at hand. He was in agony for the Lincoln. But even for the Lincoln he didn't "know," and he lost fifty pounds. He became wild-eyed and strange, as if something were going to explode in him.

"Let it alone, son ! Don't you bother about it !" urged Uncle Oscar. But it was as if the boy couldn't really hear what his uncle was saying.

"I've got to know for the Derby ! I've got to know for the Derby !" the child reiterated, his big blue eyes blazing with a sort of madness.

His mother noticed how overwrought he was.

"You'd better go to the seaside. Wouldn't you like to go now to the seaside, instead of waiting ? I think you'd better," she said, looking down at him anxiously, her heart curiously heavy because of him.

But the child lifted his uncanny blue eyes.

"I couldn't possibly go before the Derby, mother !" he said. "I couldn't possibly !"

"Why not ?" she said, her voice becoming heavy when she was opposed. "Why not ? You can still go from the seaside to see the Derby with your Uncle Oscar, if that's what you wish. No need for you to wait here. Besides, I think you

THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 423

care too much about these races. It's a bad sign. My family has been a gambling family, and you won't know till you grow up how much damage it has done. But it has done damage. I shall have to send Bassett away, and ask Uncle Oscar not to talk racing to you, unless you promise to be reasonable about it: go away to the seaside and forget it. You're all nerves!"

"I'll do what you like, mother, so long as you don't send me away till after the Derby," the boy said.

"Send you away from where? Just from this house?"

"Yes," he said gazing at her.

"Why, you curious child, what makes you care about this house so much, suddenly? I never knew you loved it."

He gazed at her without speaking. He had a secret within a secret, something he had not divulged, even to Bassett or to his Uncle Oscar.

But his mother, after standing undecided and a little bit sullen for some moments, said:

"Very well, then! Don't go to the seaside till after the Derby, if you don't wish it. But promise me you won't let your nerves go to pieces. Promise you won't think so much about horse-racing and *events*, as you call them!"



"Oh, no," said the boy casually. "I won't think much about them, mother. You needn't worry. I wouldn't worry, mother, if I were you."

"If you were me and I were you," said his mother, "I wonder what we *should* do!"

"But you know you needn't worry, mother, don't you?" the boy repeated.

"I should be awfully glad to know it," she said wearily.

"Oh, well, you *can*, you know. I mean, you *ought* to know you needn't worry," he insisted.

"Ought I? Then I'll see about it," she said.

Paul's secret of secrets was his wooden horse, that which had no name. Since he was emancipated from a nurse and a nursery-governess, he had had his rocking-horse removed to his own bedroom at the top of the house.

"Surely, you're too big for a rocking-horse!" his mother had remonstrated.

"Well, you see, mother, till I can have a *real* horse, I like to have *some* sort of animal about," had been his quaint answer.

"Do you feel he keeps you company?" she laughed.

"Oh, yes! He's very good, he always keeps me company, when I'm there," said Paul.

THE ROCKING-HORSE WINNER 425

So the horse, rather shabby, stood in an arrested prance in the boy's bedroom.

The Derby was drawing near, and the boy grew more and more tense. He hardly heard what was spoken to him, he was very frail, and his eyes were really uncanny. His mother had sudden strange seizures of uneasiness about him. Sometimes, for half-an-hour, she would feel a sudden anxiety about him that was almost anguish. She wanted to rush to him at once, and know he was safe.

Two nights before the Derby, she was at a big party in town, when one of her rushes of anxiety about her boy, her first-born, gripped her heart till she could hardly speak. She fought with the feeling, might and main, for she believed in commonsense. But it was too strong. She had to leave the dance and go downstairs to telephone to the country. The children's nursery-governess was terribly surprised and startled at being rung up in the night.

"Are the children all right, Miss Wilmot?"

"Oh, yes, they are quite all right."

"Master Paul? Is he all right?"

"He went to bed as right as a trivet. Shall I run up and look at him?"

"No," said Paul's mother reluctantly. "No!"



Don't trouble. It's all right. Don't sit up. We shall be home fairly soon." She did not want her son's privacy intruded upon.

"Very good," said the governess.

It was about one o'clock when Paul's mother and father drove up to their house. All was still. Paul's mother went to her room and slipped off her white fur cloak. She had told her maid not to wait up for her. She heard her husband downstairs, mixing a whisky-and-soda.

And then, because of the strange anxiety at her heart, she stole upstairs to her son's room. Noiselessly she went along the upper corridor. Was there a faint noise? What was it?

She stood, with arrested muscles, outside his door, listening. There was a strange, heavy, and yet not loud noise. Her heart stood still. It was a soundless noise, yet rushing and powerful. Something huge, in violent, hushed motion. What was it? What in God's name was it? She ought to know. She felt that she knew the noise. She knew what it was.

Yet she could not place it. She couldn't say what it was. And on and on it went, like a madness.

Softly, frozen with anxiety and fear, she turned the door-handle.



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The room was dark. Yet in the space near the window, she heard and saw something plunging to and fro. She gazed in fear and amazement.

'Then suddenly she switched on the light, and saw her son, in his green pyjamas, madly surging on the rocking-horse. The blaze of light suddenly lit him up, as he urged the wooden horse, and lit her up, as she stood, blonde, in her dress of pale green and crystal, in the doorway.

"Paul!" she cried, "Whatever are you doing?"

"It's Malabar!" he screamed, in a powerful, strange voice. "It's Malabar!"

His eyes blazed at her for one strange and senseless second, as he ceased urging his wooden horse. Then he fell with a crash to the ground, and she, all her tormented motherhood flooding upon her, rushed to gather him up.

But he was unconscious, and unconscious he remained, with some brain-fever. He talked and tossed, and his mother sat stonily by his side.

"Malabar! It's Malabar! Bassett, Bassett, I know! It's Malabar!"

So the child cried, trying to get up and urge the rocking-horse that gave him his inspiration.

"What does he mean by Malabar?" asked the heart-frozen mother.

"I don't know," said the father stonily.



"What does he mean by Malabar?" she asked her brother Oscar.

"It's one of the horses running for the Derby," was the answer.

And, in spite of himself, Oscar Cresswell spoke to Bassett, and himself put a thousand on Malabar : at fourteen to one.

The third day of the illness was critical : they were waiting for a change. The boy, with his rather long, curly hair, was tossing ceaselessly on the pillow. He neither slept nor regained consciousness, and his eyes were like blue stones. His mother sat, feeling her heart had gone, turned actually into a stone.

In the evening, Oscar Cresswell did not come, but Bassett sent a message, saying could he come up for one moment, just one moment? Paul's mother was very angry at the intrusion, but on second thoughts she agreed. The boy was the same. Perhaps Bassett might bring him to consciousness.

The gardener, a shortish fellow with a little brown moustache, and sharp little brown eyes, tiptoed into the room, touched his imaginary cap to Paul's mother, and stole to the bedside, staring with glittering, smallish eyes at the tossing, dying child.

"Master Paul!" he whispered. "Master Paul!"

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Malabar came in first all right, a clean win. I did as you told me. You've made over seventy thousand pounds, you have ; you've got over eighty thousand. Malabar came in all right, Master Paul."

"Malabar ! Malabar ! Did I say Malabar, mother ? Did I say Malabar ? Do you think I'm lucky, mother ? I knew Malabar, didn't I ? Over eighty thousand pounds ! I call that lucky, don't you, mother ? Over eighty thousand pounds ! I knew, didn't I know I knew ? Malabar came in all right. If I ride my horse till I'm sure, then I tell you, Bassett, you can go as high as you like. Did you go for all you were worth, Bassett ?"

"I went a thousand on it, Master Paul."

"I never told you, mother, that if I can ride my horse, and *get there*, then I'm absolutely sure—oh, absolutely ! Mother, did I ever tell you ? I *am* lucky ! "

"No, you never did," said the mother.

But the boy died in the night.

And even as he lay dead, his mother heard her brother's voice saying to her : 'My God, Hester, you're eighty-odd thousand to the good, and a poor devil of a son to the bad. But, poor devil, poor devil, he's best gone out of a life where he rides his rocking-horse to find a winner.'

D. H. Lawrence.



THE DISCOVERY OF POETRY

I

EARS TO HEAR AND EYES TO SEE

Jessica: I am never merry when I hear sweet
music.

Lorenzo: The reason is, your spirits are attentive.
The Merchant of Venice.

When the Present has latched its postern behind
my tremulous stay,

And the May month flaps its glad green leaves
like wings,

Delicate-filmed as new-spun silk, will the
neighbours say.

'He was a man who used to notice such things' ?
Thomas Hardy : *Afterwards*.

'Ears to hear,'—'eyes to see,' it seems a fairly obvious suggestion at first. All of us who have normal health and fortune have quite serviceable eyes and ears, and take them about with us whether we wish to or not. If you were going out for a day's walk and I proposed that you should take feet to walk with, you would naturally think I was a little mad. So let me in this case try to prove my sanity by explaining what I mean.



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It is perhaps simpler to take the two senses separately ; so we will first consider the matter of hearing. Now although all of us who are not deaf can hear, you may have noticed that there are times when you seem to be able to hear rather better or worse than usual. If, for instance, you are busy reading a book or doing a puzzle or watching a beetle or thinking out a problem, you very often do not hear what people are saying quite close to you, and sometimes they have to say your name more than once before you look up. And all of you who are still at school will remember times when you found yourselves suddenly expected to answer a question, a question you could have answered perfectly well,—if only you had known what it was. But when it was asked your thoughts were far away, you were (to use the ordinary phrase) ‘not attending.’ That word ‘attending’ will perhaps be the simplest to use to show you what I mean. The ears act automatically, and accept every sound which comes within their range. But in order to ‘hear’ it at all your mind must be awake, and in order to hear it to any real purpose it must be not only awake but attentive. All this is perhaps commonplace, and I only mention it because it leads on to the two main points I want to make. These



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are, first, that very often we think we are attending when we are not ; and secondly that it is possible by practice and training to increase and intensify our powers of hearing, not in the sense that we hear things at a greater distance, but that we hear more accurately and more fully.

The first point can be proved and illustrated without difficulty. How often have we imagined we were giving some sound our full attention, when as a matter of fact we were giving it only a very lazy and distracted hearing! We may perhaps be looking out of a window on a spring morning, alive to the beauty stirring all round us, and yet it is not until a friend says 'Listen to that thrush' that we hear it, as it seems for the first time. Or we may be listening to someone making a speech, or reading a story, hearing every word, yet attending but fitfully. There is a way of proving this, which I suggest as a good way of spending now and then the last ten minutes of a school hour. It is really a kind of game, and I call it 'Poetical bumps,' because it bears a family resemblance to that slightly painful but entertaining game called 'Musical bumps,' which is in great favour at children's parties. In 'musical bumps' someone plays the piano, stopping unexpectedly from time to time,

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and the last to sit down on the floor when the music stops is 'out.' In poetical bumps someone reads a poem instead of playing a tune, and when the reading stops you have to write down the last two lines read. Now the interesting thing about the game is this : that if the reader does not tell you what he is going to do, but just says 'Listen to this,' so that you do not realize what is afoot, then when he stops half-way through a stanza and demands that you write the last two lines, you can hardly ever remember them, however well you thought you were listening. But once you know what is coming you will soon be amazed at the accuracy with which you can both hear and remember. And that added power of attention was in you all the time, lying unused.

So when I ask you to bring 'ears to hear,' I mean—first of all—a power of attention used to the full ; and secondly an attention which is being made progressively more accurate and more critical by careful practice and training. Get in the habit of listening, of learning to distinguish between one sound and another,—if it be only between the different noises made by the doors of your house when they are closed. Anyone who has begun to study music, and to find out what



it means to listen for themes and harmonies in the various parts in a concerted piece, will at once admit that in a few months his powers of accurate hearing have increased beyond all reckoning. Without such training you will never learn what music is, never appreciate and understand it, never be master of the beauties it can give you. It is by such a training, too, that the naturalist—even the amateur naturalist—learns to know one bird's note from another's, and to build up from what is to most of us a confused medley of sweet noises a vision of the birds behind the songs; no new note but he hears it, and either welcomes an expected immigrant or thrills to find some unlooked-for visitor. And it is only by such training that you can discover the full beauty of poetry.

Perhaps I need not now spend much time in explaining what I mean by 'eyes to see.' Just as 'ears to hear' meant ears to 'listen'—or 'attend,' so 'eyes to see' means 'eyes to observe,' where by 'observing' is meant giving your mind to those sights which come before your eyes. Here again, —and perhaps more clearly than in the case of hearing,—it is easy to show that we can both use more fully and improve our powers of attention. How many of you, if suddenly challenged, could

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describe accurately a room in your home, the face of a friend, or indeed any of those hundred and one scenes and figures which pass before your eyes every day ? Look round the room you are in with the knowledge that you are to be asked to describe it, and you will see it with new eyes. Most of us have the power of careful and accurate observation, yet how seldom do we use it ! Our minds grow lazy ; they see the beginning of an action and assume the rest. There is a story of a professor who, wishing to drive home this lesson of accurate observation, instructed his class to imitate his action ; he then dipped a finger in a glass of whitish liquid before him, and placed a finger in his mouth. One by one his pupils dipped fingers in the glass and tasted a liquid whose bitter flavour made them squirm. At length the professor, looking sadly along the row of still grimacing faces, observed : ' I regret, gentlemen, that no one of you noticed that the finger I placed in my mouth was not the finger which I dipped in the glass.' How simple ! Yet which of us would not have been deceived ?

If we can train our powers of hearing, still more can we develop our observation ; and it is even more worth while. It would take a book in itself to talk of the worlds of nature, of human



life, of art, which are gradually revealed to the man who has eyes to see. By making the effort we can easily enough live for half an hour with our eyes well open and our minds awake; and by the richness of our experience in that half-hour we can judge of the misty vision with which most of us are content to pass through the years. One of the main differences between a great and a second-rate artist,—whether painter or author.—lies in the quality of their observation. The poor artist works with types, the great artist with individuals. The figures which live in painting or story would never have been created had not their characteristics first been carefully and accurately observed, either in one person or in many, in real life. And here, as in everything, what the artist must have in abundance if he is to be great, we must also have in some degree, if our life is to be a rich and a happy one.

Attention and observation—these then are what I ask of you, these the talents which you must use to the full and learn to develop if you are really to discover poetry. It is not, when we examine it, quite so easy or obvious a request as it seemed. And though I have perhaps made it clear how valuable these qualities are, I have still to explain what their special place is in the

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appreciation of poetry. The use of the eyes for this purpose must have a chapter to itself ; since this question brings others in its train. But the value of learning to *hear* poetry can be discussed more briefly.

Poetry, like music, and almost to the same degree as music depends for its first impression upon the appeal it makes to the ear. No poetry should be judged by any other sense before that of hearing, and therefore all poetry should be read aloud,—even if it be only that kind of ‘ reading aloud ’ which means the silent shaping of sound in the mind of a solitary reader. The primary appeal poetry makes is the appeal of beautiful sound, quite apart from the sense of the words,—though as we shall see later the relation of the sound of poetry to its sense is in a measure a test of its worth. Words placed cunningly together have their effect of pleasure, even if their sense be not understood, as you can test for yourselves by listening to any beautiful passage by a foreign poet, Greek or Italian for choice, for these share with our own language the merit of great natural music. But when the sense too flows into our mind upon the tide of sound, then our pleasure is increased, even this primary pleasure of hearing, for a reason which we will leave to be considered



in our next chapter. Listen for a moment to these lines from 'The Ancient Mariner' of Coleridge, as you read them 'aloud' to yourself, or have them read to you:

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook,
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

That is very great poetry. But apart from that it is, as your ears will have told you, very good hearing. And the better you were 'attending,' and the better your sense of attention is trained, the more you will have enjoyed and appreciated it. For just as the sensitive ear is most offended by the scream of a siren or the



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scrape of a knife on a plate,—so it gets the most pleasure out of beautiful sound.

Jessica complained that she was ‘never merry’ when she heard music ; and Lorenzo, who was a bit of a schoolmaster in his way, proceeded to explain to her why. But if the ‘attentive spirit’ of which he speaks does not bring merriment it brings something more profound and durable,—happiness, the happiness of a man who can drain the last drop of beauty from the song of a bird, the notes of a violin, or the speech of a poet.

II

IMAGINATION

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.

Keats : *Ode on a Grecian Urn.*

The angels keep their ancient places;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangéd faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

Francis Thompson : *In No Strange Land.*



I spoke in my last chapter of learning to use your eyes and ears, and I trust that some of you have already found out how much there is waiting for you to see and hear if you are ready to give your attention to it. Quite apart from discovering poetry, you will in this way enrich your lives more than you would now believe possible ; but that is not why I spent a chapter upon it. I am trying to show you how best to equip yourselves for our voyage, which is to be a journey through regions of the spirit, and I have laid stress on observation and attention because these things give a keen edge—not to the eye or the ear—but to the mind behind them. The world of sight and sound in which we live not only offers us its own immediate interests and pleasures, but trains our minds to see and hear in a world where keen eyes and sharp ears are of themselves unavailing. This other world is one we often visit ; we live there in our dreams, and in our waking hours books and music and our own wandering thoughts are ever at hand to guide us there. We come back reluctantly sometimes, but always we come back refreshed. It is the kingdom of Imagination.

Turn back, for a moment, to the lines from 'The Ancient Mariner' which I quoted in the

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last chapter. The Mariner is there telling of the sweet sounds that filled the sky as the ship moved on by the unseen power of the spirit 'from the land of mist and snow.' His telling of it is itself a sweet sound to us—as indeed is the whole poem—even before we have mastered the full sense of the passage. But now notice a strange thing. The more often you hear that passage spoken aloud, or read it aloud to yourself, the more you will find yourself listening not simply to the melody of the words but to the melody of which the words speak. In other words you attend more and more to the *sense*, a sense which in this case is full of sweet sounds of its own. The song of a lark, the note of a flute, the babble of birds on a spring morning, the murmur of a stream in a still wood,—all these are summoned up by these words. And just as a trained musician can listen to several instruments playing in harmony, so that he catches the separate value of each and yet does not lose the greater effect of the whole, so with practice you will find that while your mind seems to be giving its whole attention to the actual sounds your ears are hearing, yet it can at the same time listen to sounds not of this world, 'ditties of no tone,' and by weaving the two together can



attain and appreciate the complete beauty of the poem. Read through the passage again now, and already you will find it more beautiful than before. You have begun to use your imagination.

Now the instance I have just chosen is perhaps an unusual one. Poetry does not so often speak to us of sounds ; far more frequently it gives us pictures. Sometimes indeed it does both, and even in the passage I have just read there is much to see as well as hear in your mind. But usually our minds are kept more busy 'seeing' than 'hearing,' and it is of this 'mind-seeing' that we most often use the word 'Imagination,' as words like 'vision' and 'insight,' which are so often used of this power of the mind, remind us.

It is as well here to remember that poetry has none of the direct appeal to the eye which it has to the ear. If it is beautifully written or printed we do perhaps enjoy looking at it.—it is 'a pleasure to read.' But this pleasure is due to the writing or the type, not to the beauty of the poem. Our eyes at first glance seem to be of no service in the matter ; but it is none the less true that the better we have trained our eyes to observe the nearer we shall be to the appreciation of poetry—

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observation will help us to see more clearly in our minds what the poem describes, to see the 'sense' of a poem just as we tried to hear the 'sense' of the passage about the skylark and the flute. But this 'seeing in our minds' is such an important thing that it is worth while making as clear as possible what the phrase means.

Just now I asked you to try and hear Coleridge's 'hidden brook' singing its quiet tune to the sleeping woods. Now in the same way I want you to shut your eyes for a minute and 'see' that brook. You can probably do one as easily as the other. But while most of you, I expect, heard much the same kind of sound, I am sure you will all have seen very different pictures,—different not only in kind but in distinctness. Some will have been faint and smudgy, others clear and full of detail. We all of us differ tremendously in the ability to create these mental pictures or images. If for instance I were suddenly to ask you to think of a rabbit, and could take some kind of spirit photograph of what you saw, we should have some interesting and curious pictures. Some might see nothing more than a printed word, some merely a blurred outline, rather like a full moon with two points sticking out of it for ears,—no special colour



and no special shape. Others will have seen something which was more or less certainly a rabbit, if rather a dull and lifeless one. While here and there may be one whose picture was vivid, vigorous, detailed, to the tremble of a whisker, the wind in the fur, the quiver of the white scut.

Whether you are good at this or not, practice will certainly make you better ; probably all of you do it more than you realize, because a great deal of this 'imagining' is more or less unconscious and goes on without your being fully aware of it. We often for instance find our attention wandering just before some interesting or exciting event—a football match, a play, an excursion ; and this 'day-dreaming' usually consists in the contemplation of pictures of the event which we have formed in our own mind. This is a very common form of mind-seeing or imagination ; and so is that which we call 'memory,' whenever this takes the form of a recollection of definite scenes in which we have taken part. And both these kinds of imagination have their place in the creative art of a writer.

But perhaps the commonest form of imagination is that which we exercise when reading ; it is roughly true to say that the more we imagine

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what we read the more we enjoy reading. In any case whenever we *have* to read books whether we enjoy them or not (a predicament not unknown in schools), a deliberate exercise of the imagination often makes the distasteful pages not only palatable but exciting. To take an extreme instance, a list of Latin nouns to be memorized can be turned into a single comprehensive picture, in which eagles chase doves from star to star, while goddesses and their daughters watch them from the moon, and masculine farmers and mere common inhabitants from the earth. It is clear how geography and history books will come to life if tackled in this spirit. Mountains and rivers and towns will take shape out of chaos, and generals and priests and lawyers will be no longer names on a printed page, but live people walking and posturing in the world behind the eyes. Still more so with novels and tales. Your mind should become a stage on which the characters come and go ; you should become absorbed in your book, lost in the scenes it creates ; you should forget all your surroundings and roam the greenwood with Robin Hood or sail the seas with Drake, until an interruption shatters the frail vision and brings you back—bump—to earth again.



That is the way to read ; that is how you will come more and more to like, not the writers who tell the most thrilling stories, but those who by the force of their own imagination create so true and so convincing a world that it is easy for you to forget yourself and step inside it. And if that is the right way to read history and fiction, it is above all the right way to read poetry. The aim of all poets is to make you accept their poetry and all that it implies. We shall find that they often ask us to enter not only into a new world but into the minds of the people who inhabit it. But at first let us be content to aim at making our mental vision of the country they bring before us as clear as possible. The poet himself has the hardest task, for he must have an imagination exact and clear and vivid if he is to create at all. But the task of his reader is,—or should be,—no light one ; for he must be able to share that world of the writer's imagining.

People with more caution than faith sometimes comfort themselves with the saying, 'Seeing is Believing,'—meaning that it is wrong to believe anything you cannot see. This is a doctrine of despair. But the phrase can be rescued from its unhappy surroundings, and in one sense used



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to express a profound truth,—used also to induce men, not to believe less, but to see more. The more our eyes learn to see the more our mind learns to see ; and the more clearly we see with our minds the more we shall be ready to believe the truth and beauty of great art and great literature.

Set out, then, upon our voyage determined to make the most of it and to miss nothing by the way. It means hard work ;—but when you are on a real boat, would you not rather be up and about than sitting half asleep on a deck-chair ? If you are ready to be interested, then hard work will not frighten you, and I can promise you visions of worlds you never dreamed of. If you are merely bored by the thought of work then no one can do anything for you. Some things may perhaps be hammered into reluctant minds, but poetry and the meaning of poetry are not among them. If you just sit back and let your mind have a rest when a poem is read to you, it is sheer waste of time, and some beauty has gone past your blind eyes, for ever ; in Francis Thompson's beautiful phrase, your 'estrangéd face' will have missed 'the many-splendoured thing.' But if your mind is keen and awake ;—if you set it to work upon the



poem as you set your teeth to work on an apple, then you will get—what no one else can get for you from either apple or poem—all the sweetness and nourishment out of it for yourself.

I have quoted one passage from 'The Ancient Mariner,' which is one of the simplest and most wonderful of all poems, full of vivid pictures. Take now another passage from the same poem and now, as you read it to yourself or have it read to you, try and live for the moment in the world Coleridge has created :

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free ;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be ;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion,
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

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Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink ;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout,
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

There is much that could be said about the sound of that passage, about the masterly use of word and rhythm, about the way the repetition drives home the sense of monotony. But that we can consider when we discuss *how* the thing is done. What I am concerned with now is *what* has been done ; how in twenty-four short lines the poet has built up this convincing picture of a ship abandoned to silence and decay in the lonely tropical ocean. And if you really got your mind's eyes to work you will have seen a picture which perhaps you may never forget ; at any rate you will have worked harder than you often do and enjoyed yourself more. If not, then you



were being lazy about it, and you should go back and do it again. One thing I am sure of: once you have had the experience you will be ready for more ; you will come on this voyage of discovery not as pressed men but as willing volunteers whose hearts leap and eyes turn seaward as the ship moves slowly out of harbour.

P. H. B. Lyon.



THE SECRET OF THE HILLS

In every man there is a desire to stand where he has not stood ; to see what he has not seen ; and to look beyond anything that shuts in his view. This desire manifests itself in many forms. It is as much the mainspring of the explorer as of the man of science, or of the philosopher. Who is there that has not said, " Let us go round still one more bend in the road, and see what lies hidden," or " Let us breast one more ridge and behold what is beyond ?" For some men it is the " categorical imperative," for others the barren pursuit of knowledge, but for a few it is the command to go forth and see those mysterious ranges of snow and ice from their midst. An inborn love of the hills—be they Surrey Downs or snowy heights—is the birthright of most men, and it only requires an opportunity to transform this instinct into the true love of the mountaineer for his mountains. To wrest fully their secret from the hills, a man must search among the rocks clean-cut by the chisel of Nature ; he must seek amid the perils of the ice-fall ; and he must face failure when he has apparently reached his



goal. Though he may spend his best days wrestling with the heights, in the end, maybe, the winds will sing his funeral lament, the snow will bury him, and he will only gain their secret when he

"Failing, sleeps contented at their feet."

But over him there will be the finest tombstone in the world—a great mountain: with this, the finest epitaph—He died for the sake of his great love.

To the mountaineer, all that is best and purest, most strenuous and most beautiful, is associated with the mountains. They are to him what a lady of old was to her troubadour—an unattainable being, to be loved and reverenced, an object to be immortalized in poetry and deeds, and an incentive to lead a clean and upright life. In the olden days a man might ride forth in the pride and strength of his youth, to conquer dragons and rescue virgins. The love of adventure and danger is as much as ever part of a man's character; but where now is there aught so like knight-errantry as the winning of virgin-peaks and the conquering of the dragons that live in the pitiless rocks? No one can withstand the witchery of the tramp through the redolent pine-



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trees in the velvety blackness of the night. With his pack upon his back the mountaineer leaves the cramping environment of civilization, a new and great freedom fills his soul, a longing for the battles to be fought, mixed with a strange yearning after a vagabond's life.

" All I seek the heaven above
And the road below me."

Soon he leaves the twinkling lights of the valley, and the cool darkness of the forest receives him into its arms. When he crushes the pine-needles under his feet there is a smell sweeter to him than incense, and overhead the crescent moon gleams through the delicate network of the branches. Gradually the trees grow more stunted ; sometimes they are strangely twisted and grotesque from their fierce struggle for existence, wrung by the icy blasts till they are all but rooted from the meagre soil where some ill fate has planted them. When the climber rises above the trees he is surrounded by a great amphitheatre of peaks, sharp and crystalline against the starry sky. How black are the shadows ! How mysterious the snow-fields ! How immutable the peaks ! But who shall dare describe the sacred beauty of night among the mountains ? Must not Night



speak to her children in her own tongue ? Words but recall her voice to those who have heard ; he who has not heard, let him not attempt to understand.

Before the traveller has grasped the full grandeur of his position there is a faint band of primrose in the east—the herald of the dawn. The primrose turns to pink, and the pink to crimson, as if heated by some vast smokeless furnace ; then, as the highest peaks gleam like spear heads in the sun's first rays, from the darkness leap out rocks, the precipice takes form, what was blackness becomes light and shadow, and in another moment the last layer of darkness is peeled away and every crag revealed. Then in the bright sunlight the snow-crystals crunch merrily underfoot, glacier and ice-fall, rock and snow-slope, follow one another in quick succession. There may come long hours of walking in the soft snow, when the sun burns, and the climber is hypnotized by the rhythmical movements of his own shadow, but at last, from a confined view to the vastness of the illimitable, he steps upon the summit of his peak, and sees the piles of cloud and the endless vistas of the ranges. Then comes perhaps the finest hour in eth whole day. There is a sense of dangers past,

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of difficulties overcome, and above all of the silence and vastness of Nature which seem to enter into the soul only in the solitary places of the world—in the desert, at sea, and on the veld at night. Who can describe these moments ? Are they not a glimpse into the unity and diversity of Nature where lies the root of all wisdom ?

But, all too soon, lest night find him still amid the snows, the traveller must start to descend. With weary limbs he stumbles down the moraine, to where a glacier pool is inviting him to brace his tired muscles, and

"With a flame-flash of engulfing fire
Plunge through the iced embrace."

Endowed with new life, he supples himself upon a flower-starred alp in front of the tent, and gazes at the piled-up masses of silver cumulus, and the peak he has ascended, with a feeling of absolute contentment. But such days of unclouded sunshine and success are not the only happy ones that a climber knows. No less does he love the days of storm and tempest, when upon an exposed ridge the battalions of clouds marshal themselves to hurl volleys of hail and thunder at the adventurer. Then must hand and eye be sure and muscle strong ; there must be no



flinching, no wavering. All the men upon the rope must work together like a trained crew, for to give in is treason, to fall is annihilation for all. But, to the man who is master of himself, there is time to admire the wildness of the scene. The wind seems to blow from all directions at once ; in the riot of the elements everything quivers and the sky falls as solid snow. Already the figures in front are a mass of white, and great icicles hang from beard and hair. Can there really be life and warmth below ? Or is this the reality and the rest a dream ? Then, again, there are the days when the mountains put on their robes of state, those cloud-veils that are the raiment for their most beautiful ceremonies. What is there more entrancing than a vast expanse of snow-field shrouded in a light mist ? All forms are distorted and enlarged ; they even seem to writhe and twist as the mist curls ; the edges of the crevasses are jewelled ; and all is silent. Then a puff of wind may come, tearing aside the curtain and revealing a distant mountain, a masterpiece hung in Nature's picture gallery, and framed in encircling clouds. Fine days may pass and leave little impression on the mind, but a mountain seen hanging in the mists will remain in the memory, when the recollection

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of cloudless panoramas has passed away. Lastly, though to appreciate these requires much schooling and many bitter experiences, there are the days when the sky itself seems to be dissolving, and the horizon is shut in with a leaden pall. Little curls of mist steal through the pine-branches, the distances are soft, the hills are indistinct, the foreground is unnaturally bright and glistening, and the whole air is filled with a multitude of treble voices that are the choir of Nature singing the song of the rain.

To him who has tasted of the well of life there is but one instinct—to mount, to rise, to mount unceasingly. O human littleness ! O sordidness of the world, you cannot survive the profundity of the mountains, where the soul is cleansed, the mind exalted, and the spirit washed bright in the illimitable snows.



THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

Mr. Roosevelt once divided success into two kinds : the rare kind which comes to the man who can do what no one else can do, to the genius ; and the commoner kind, which comes to the man who has developed ordinary qualities further than most men. This distinction would be difficult to draw in practice. There can be no doubt that the genius of Mozart included special powers which in the ordinary man are not only undeveloped, but also non-existent. But Napoleon also was a genius ; and we cannot say that any of his powers do not exist in the ordinary man. His genius, and even his almost magical influence over men, were only the result of an extraordinary combination and development of ordinary powers. We cannot say that he had a special faculty such as we find in great artists ; and, indeed, Emerson, in his studies of Representative Men, took Napoleon as the man of the world, seeming therefore to insist upon the fact that his genius consisted only of ordinary qualities very highly developed. Again, men are often born with a very wonderful special faculty, whether

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for musical composition or chess-playing or mathematics, whom no one would call men of genius. The technical gift of Mozart is not very uncommon ; but we do not call it genius unless it is combined with the less specialised and less easily defined power of using it to express something of moment. Such gifts are mere tools, whose value depends upon the manner in which they are used, although the man who does not possess them must be continually hampered by the lack of them. But Mr. Roosevelt, who was addressing an audience mainly consisting of ordinary men, was inclined to insist upon the fact that success in most things can be obtained without these extraordinary gifts. He took the line of Reynolds, who, in addressing the students of the Academy, almost contended that there was no such thing as genius even in painting, and that a man of ordinary gifts could reach the highest excellency in it by a right and assiduous use of his powers.

Here we are not far from the idea that genius consists in taking pains. But, when we say that the right kind of pains must always be taken, we leave genius a good deal of its mystery. For one of the main difficulties in every activity, whether art or statesmanship or science or business, is to



take the right kind of pains, to attempt what is best suited to the powers of the individual and also to the object he has in view. There is a kind of sagacity needed for this which we cannot analyse, and for the lack of which the most splendid natural gifts are often wasted. Thus, when Mr. Roosevelt tells us that for great success all we need is the extraordinary development of ordinary qualities, he still leaves us in the dark about that power which some men possess of developing ordinary qualities into an extraordinary efficiency for a particular purpose. There is a secret of success which he has not analysed, and which we do not explain when we call it will or energy or character or common sense. It is not merely will or energy, because there is in it a power of direction which these words do not imply. Character is a word too vague, and used in too many different senses, to explain anything ; and as for common sense, the very fact that it is common prevents it from being the cause of uncommon success.

In men who succeed greatly, whether we call them men of genius or not, there is often an urgency of desire not to be found in the great mass of mankind. They seem to know very clearly what they want to do, and from the first

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employ all their powers in doing it. By a kind of instinct they plan their lives so that no effort of theirs is wasted, and so that all their experience and actions have a cumulative power ; and this is the case whether their success is material or spiritual or scientific or artistic. When we read the lives of great men we cannot but be struck by the manner in which all kinds of experiences that might in themselves seem to be random, or even disastrous, are utilised in the long run.

There are saints who would never have attained to such a height and subtlety of virtue if they had not been sinners in their youth. There are artists who, through early hack work, obtain a peculiar pliancy and swiftness of accomplishment. There are statesmen who seem to learn all that they need to know about men in a quiet country life. Such were Saint Augustine, Shakespeare, and Cromwell—all as different from each other as any men could be, yet having in common the mysterious and most valuable power of profiting by every kind of experience. Cromwell, indeed, seems to have become a statesman and general only because the emergency called for him. But for the Civil War he might have been a country gentleman all his life. And yet he must have been learning from the first, and from all his quite



ordinary experiences, lessons such as most men never learn at all. In fact, he must have had that mental power of digestion which is the main secret of success even in those activities which also need very special gifts, the power which made Rembrandt a greater painter than Vandyck, Beethoven a greater composer than Mendelssohn, Shakespeare a greater poet than Fletcher ; which, wherever it is used, always sets the master far above the mere brilliant specialist.
